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No country for losers?

Gender, (in)equality, and the discursive construction of subjects and values in Polish politics

Barbara Gawęda

Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where otherwise indicated, this thesis has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

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Abstract

Mainstream scholarly literature has examined the post-1989 transformations in Eastern Europe without sufficient attention to gendered perspectives. Most feminist scholars and mainstream political scientists expected that the processes of democratization and Europeanization would be harbingers of positive change, and have not fully succeeded in explaining the current lack of gender equality in the region. This dissertation attempts to fill the gap by combining the insights from ‘Western’ theoretical contributions with empirical research of the Polish case. By drawing on multiple theoretical angles (post-colonialism, nationalism and gender, feminist institutionalism, feminist political economy, Europeanization), I aim to rethink the complex position of Poland in the processes of Europeanization and soft norm diffusion. The recent ‘war on gender’, which took the form of a virulent anti-equality and anti-minorities discursive campaign, has demonstrated that, despite the political and economic changes after 1989, gender inequality and social exclusion persist, and indeed may have intensified. My research explores the current discursive products and legacies (construction of subjects and values) of transformation and Europeanization as observed in mainstream political debates.

This dissertation focuses on debates in the Polish parliament, the *Sejm*, because it is the main site of political discourse in Poland and thus influences also broader societal debates. My main argument is that gendered discourses in the Polish parliament reproduce patterns of domination and inequality, thereby creating discursive categories and subjects that are excluded and marginalized. Dominant discourses on masculinity, femininity, and sexuality prescribe a conservative set of social relations in the family and the nation. This implies that anyone who does not fulfil these discursive standards gets symbolically stigmatized and emerges from the political process as a discursive ‘loser’.

Furthermore, the dissertation argues that the ways in which Europeanization and democratization were implemented in Poland, focusing primarily on neoliberal economic reforms, have left free rein to right-wing forces and the catholic church to define values and subjects. I specifically address the influential role of the catholic church in the Polish political context and argue that the anti-gender equality and anti-diversity mobilizations are cyphers for a broader backlash led by nationalist conservative actors against Europeanization and globalization processes.

My contributions lie in the theoretical and conceptual bridging of various literatures (i.e. on transformation and gender) and the application of critical discourse analysis to the study of Polish parliamentary debates. Moreover, the thesis exposes invisible and ‘gender neutral’ norms about subjects and gender roles as constructed in Polish politics, with particular focus on welfare and family models and the construction of the nation. I highlight hegemonic masculinities and the marginalization or silencing of alternative discourses. The analysis provides insights into the mechanisms of gender power that construct some groups as the norm and others as problematic or deviant.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

AWS	<i>Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność</i> (Solidarity Electoral Action)
CDA	critical discourse analysis
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
GUS	<i>Główny Urząd Statystyczny</i> (Main Statistical Office)
IVF	<i>in vitro</i> fertilization
LPR	<i>Liga Polskich Rodzin</i> (League of Polish Families)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PiS	<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</i> (Law and Justice)
PO	<i>Platforma Obywatelska</i> (Civic Platform)
PR	<i>Polska Razem</i> (Poland Together)
PRL	<i>Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa</i> (Polish People's Republic)
PZPR	<i>Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza</i> (Polish United Workers' Party)
RP	<i>Rzeczpospolita Polska</i> (Republic of Poland)
SLD	<i>Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej</i> (Democratic Left Alliance)
SP	<i>Solidarna Polska</i> (Solidarity of Poland)
TR	<i>Twój Ruch</i> (Your Movement)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

'(...) the quality of a society should be measured by the quality of life of its weakest members.'

Zygmunt Bauman¹

Since the early 1990s and throughout the 2000s, Polish and international political elites considered the country as the model story of regime change, democratization, and economic transformation. European and international media applauded the Polish transformation route, the Europeanizing reforms, and the successes of democratization almost univocally in comparison to other countries of the region (at least until the end of 2015, when a right-wing Eurosceptic government came to power).² Also the European Commission and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) produced vastly positive reports on Poland's performance.³

Within academia, while with less unequivocal praise, mainstream political science addressed the changes that occurred in Eastern Europe in the decades after the fall of state socialism.⁴ Without taking gender into account, mainstream political and comparative political science initially focused on the teleology of 'transition' and later, on the successes and failures of the process (Gal and Kligman 2000; Navickaite 2016). However, by not including a gendered analysis of politics, major insights concerning regime change, democratization, and transformation were lost. These studies were

¹ From the 'Living on Borrowed Time: Conversations with Citlali Rovirosa-Madrado' (2010:21).

² See for instance: the Financial Times, available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/fced9a32-4ec4-11de-8c10-00144feabdc0> (accessed September 2016); The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21605910-poland-just-had-best-25-years-half-millennium-its-transformation-remains> (accessed September 2016); and a bit more nuanced in the Guardian available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/apr/06/poland-economic-progress-social-inequality> (accessed September 2016).

³ For more details, see the EU and OECD websites, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/graphs/2014-10-06_poland_success_story_en.htm (accessed September 2016); http://oecdobserver.org/news/archivestory.php/aid/212/Polands_successful_transition.html (accessed September 2016).

⁴ Being aware of the wide and still on-going academic and political debates concerning the definition of the term 'Eastern Europe', I will use the concept according to its former understanding – referring to the whole of the so-called 'former Eastern communist bloc', including all the post-Soviet states, as well as the Central and Eastern European former state socialist satellite states that were not formally part of the Soviet Union (see a further discussion in chapter 2).

simply not sufficient and did not explain why the political and economic reforms did not produce sufficient positive change in terms of equality, inclusion, and anti-discrimination.

Therefore, as the opening quote by Zygmunt Bauman suggests, there must have been a deeper problem with both the *quality* and *equality* of the Polish society that manifested itself in the recent elections. Accordingly, the starting point of this study and the empirical puzzle that set off this research project was the observation of the strongly sexist, chauvinist, and exclusionist language in speeches of politicians, media coverage of politics, and parliamentary debates in Poland. A particular focus point was the strengthening of reactionary and anti-equality rhetoric in the past five years in Polish politics, which came to the fore in April 2012, when the Polish Minister of Justice, Jarosław Gowin, refused to sign the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the so-called Istanbul Convention). According to Minister Gowin, the document was controversial because it went 'against the family values of most Poles'. He alluded to the fact that the Istanbul Convention requires the signatories to fight stereotypical gender roles through family policies and education.⁵ Gowin blamed the foreign 'feminist ideology' that apparently claimed that 'men and women are the same'.⁶ He was echoing the language of Polish catholic church hierarchs who at the time waged a peculiar discursive war on 'gender ideology', which can be summarized in a quote by bishop Pieronek: '(...) the ideology of gender presents a threat worse than Nazism and Communism combined'.⁷

⁵ Art. 12 §1 stipulates: 'Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men.' Art. 12 §5 calls for: 'Parties [to] ensure that culture, custom, religion, tradition or so-called "honour" shall not be considered as justification for any acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.' Available at: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e> (accessed June 2016).

⁶ For the full story see: <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/gowin-krytycznie-oceniam-konwencje-re-o-przemocy-wobec-kobiet/kb25j> (accessed November 2016).

⁷ Quote coming from a conference in 2013, as cited by the article by Sławomir Sierakowski, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/27/opinion/sierakowski-the-polish-churchs-gender-problem.html?_r=0 (accessed November 2016).

The following months between 2012 to 2014 saw a virtual avalanche of similar anti-feminist and anti-gender equality rhetoric. This discourse employed chauvinist, sexist, homo- and transphobic elements in order to construct a societal and systemic enemy of the nation, the state, and the supposed religious (catholic) identity in the form of feminists, ‘genderists’, the ‘homolobby’, and ‘new leftist ideologues’. This sustained attack on the ‘ideology of gender’, while undoubtedly connected to more general societal-wide acceptance and usage of sexist language, hinted at a broader issue – a possible backlash against women’s rights, diversity, and gender equality on the one hand and an ultraconservative entrenchment of positions on the other. How can we understand these combined efforts in a state that so successfully democratized? What work was being done behind the ‘war on gender’? How did it differ from the ‘daily’ gender situation in Polish politics?

The rhetoric on ‘gender ideology’ drew on and compounded pre-existing and recurrent anti-feminist and anti-equality discourses. Thus, here are discursive examples of the ‘norm’ in Polish politics. In 2012, Joanna Mucha (then Minister of Sports and Tourism) was repeatedly asked whether it was difficult to be an attractive woman in politics. A left-wing opposition MP commented on a perceived mistake by Mucha saying that she should resign and ‘cheer on from the side’, in case she was pregnant and did not have the time to take care of herself. The MP tried to convey the message that the assumed (and in reality non-existent) pregnancy addled the minister’s brain. In 2013, Janusz Palikot (then prominent opposition MP and leader of the Your Movement party) speculated whether the parliament speaker Wanda Nowicka ‘perhaps desired to be raped’ because she did not want to step down from her post. Remarkably, these comments came from supposedly left-leaning and liberal politicians from officially pro-women political parties.

In March 2013, the former president and Solidarity icon, Lech Wałęsa, expressed his views about homosexuality:⁸

Minorities cannot stomp all over the majority. They need to know they are a minority and adjust to [having] minor things, instead of climbing to the top (...) in order to spoil others (...) I resent that this minority that I don't agree with (...) is protesting in the streets and leads my children and grandchildren astray with this minority [stuff] (...) [Homosexual MPs] should sit in the back of the plenary room. Or even behind a wall!⁹

The rash misogyny aimed at female politicians and women in visible social positions generally was not new in Eastern Europe (Krizsan et al. 2014), neither was homophobia. In Europe, today, equality has been increasingly conceptualized and implemented connecting gender discrimination to different axes of inequality, such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, etc. (Krizsan et al. 2014: 53-54). From this perspective, Polish politics was rife with discourses derogatory towards 'other' groups. So, gender dichotomies and binaries were not the only lines of exclusion and stigmatization in Polish politics.

In the spring of 2015, when running his re-election campaign, president Bronisław Komorowski was asked how it was possible for people to live and to afford an apartment when earning a 2,000zł salary a month (ca. £385). Targeting socially disadvantaged groups (a sizeable group in Poland), his answer was: 'Get another job. Take out a loan. Have a job. Do you know unemployment is dropping?'¹⁰ Komorowski displayed what was later considered typical elite alienation from the reality of most

⁸ Solidarity was the independent trade union movement established through a much lauded opposition-government agreement in 1980. It is credited with 'toppling' state socialism in Poland in 1989. For more details see for example: Ost (1990, 2005), Penn (2006), Kubik (1994).

⁹ Quote in the original: 'Oni muszą wiedzieć, że są mniejszością i muszą się do mniejszych rzeczy przystosować. A nie wchodzić na największe szczyty, na największe godziny, największe prowokacje, żeby psuć tych innych, albo wybierać z tej większości (...) Ja sobie nie życzę, żeby ta mniejszość, z którą się nie zgadzam (...) wychodziła na ulice i moje dzieci i moje wnuki bałamucila jakimiś tam mniejszościami (...) w polskim Sejmie homoseksualiści powinni siedzieć w ostatniej ławie sali plenarnej, a nie gdzieś na przodzie. Available at: <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/walesa-ostro-o-homoseksualistach-oni-musza-wiedziec-ze-sa-mniejszoscia,309290.html> (accessed November 2016).

¹⁰ Quote in the original: 'Znaleźć inną. Wziąć kredyt. Mieć pracę. Wiesz, że w Polsce spada bezrobocie?' Available at: <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1329,title,Znalezc-inna-prace-wziac-kredyt-internet-o-radach-Komorowskiego,wid,17534509,wiadomosc.html?ticaid=118222> (accessed November 2016).

Poles' lives. In a situation when more than half of the population earned below the average wage, Komorowski's complacency and self-satisfaction arguably cost him the presidential re-election.

What is more, economic exclusionism was compounded by open racism and xenophobia in response to the European refugee crisis in 2015. In the autumn of 2015, Polish politics openly turned against the potential influx of ethnic and religious minorities (which were not even present in the country yet), when the refugee quotas were discussed in Europe, the leader of the biggest Polish opposition party Law and Justice (PiS), Jarosław Kaczyński, talked about whether to welcome refugees or not in an interview for the Polish media:

There are matters of various types of dangers in this sphere [welcoming refugees]. There are in fact symptoms of dangerous and long unseen diseases in Europe: cholera in the Greek islands, dysentery in Vienna, various types of parasites and protozoa, which are not dangerous in the organisms of those people, but here can be hazardous. This does not mean necessarily discriminating... but we need to check.¹¹

In a country seemingly lacking any internal diversity (virtually homogenous ethnically, racially, and religiously), it could be expected that there is no internal *other* that would be blamed for all the evils of state socialism, transformation, or the disillusionment with the EU. As many Polish scholars have pointed out, the Polish case is peculiar because, in the face of the lack of an internal enemy, the distribution of hatred for the *other* is always in search of a target (Charkiewicz 2006; Graff 2008a, b; Leder 2014; Sowa 2011, 2015).

Thus, Polish political discourse demonstrates 'multiple inequalities' (cf. Krizsan et al. 2012). The marginalizing, stigmatizing, and exclusionary discourses are a common feature of both high and low-level politics in Poland. The presented quotes by major

¹¹ Quote in the original: 'To są kwestie związane z różnego rodzaju niebezpieczeństwami w tej sferze. Są już przecież objawy pojawienia się chorób bardzo niebezpiecznych i dawno niewidzianych w Europie: cholera na wyspach greckich, dyzenteria w Wiedniu, różnego rodzaju pasożyty, pierwotniaki, które nie są groźne w organizmach tych ludzi, mogą tutaj być groźne. To nie oznacza, żeby kogoś dyskryminować... Ale sprawdzić trzeba'. Available at: <http://www.newsweek.pl/polska/jaroslaw-kaczynski-o-uchodzcach,artykuly,372175,1.html> (accessed November 2016).

political figures point to a serious exclusionary tendency in Polish political debate that singles out, denigrates, and castigates the undesirable others. This phenomenon is present both at the level of discourse and in the worsening of social relations and legal conditions, as the mainstreaming of anti-equality rhetoric through the workings of the ‘war on gender’ showed. The recent wider and complex phenomenon of the anti-gender campaign (coupled with the ‘normal’ daily sexism in politics) has added an arguably even more virulent element to the norm, has gained more media attention and has provoked mass mobilizations. The outburst against ‘gender ideology’ (*ideologia gender*) or ‘genderism’ (*genderyzm/dżenderyzm*) embodied and referred to multiple meanings and signifiers – Europe, equality, diversity, sexual expression, gender fluidity. It connected to historical reactions that are symptomatic of the Polish and often wider transformation and post-transformation processes following the regime changes in 1989 (see further discussion in chapters 2 and 4).

As can be seen in the above examples, Polish political language varied from the ‘benignly’ sexist, traditionally Polish chivalry to outright violent misogyny. At the same time, and puzzlingly so, there were instances of socially progressive legislation in the years 2011-2015. For instance, rape and sexual crimes became offences that were to be prosecuted publicly from 2013 onwards (instead of private legal suits that had to be filed by the survivors before). The Istanbul Convention was eventually signed and ratified in 2015. Childcare leave extensions came into force in 2012. Therefore, the dissertation examines how it is possible for Polish parliamentarians to express ultra-conservative and nationalist ideas while simultaneously pursuing legal changes that appear more egalitarian and women-friendly. The question is how and why the backlash against gender equality and diversity continued and renewed itself (or re-invented itself as with the ‘war on gender’) in Poland despite democratic transformation and Europeanization processes.

To restate the puzzle in other terms, after almost three decades of ‘successful democratic transformation’ and thirteen years of European Union membership, Polish politics and society at large have not managed to achieve more equal gender relations or more room for societal diversity, despite several practical legislative attempts. There is a hegemony of particular interests that get articulated in the form of often vicious

discourses constructing and perpetuating social exclusion and structural and symbolic gender inequalities, which arguably undermine efforts at positive change. The dissertation explores and explains these exclusionist, sexist, and homophobic stereotypes that dominate discursively in Polish politics.

Furthermore, from the perspective of December 2016 – January 2017, the success narrative of the ‘posterchild’ of post-state socialist transformation cannot account for the apparent radical right-wing and illiberal turn in Polish politics that occurred with the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015. International and liberal Polish elites were shocked. Within the mainstream discourse, it was unclear why such an anti-liberal democratic mobilization of Polish voters occurred. In this dissertation, my aim is to show that the period of apparent liberal democratic stability and post-politics in the period between 2011 and 2015 can be seen as a swansong of the centrist-liberal ‘common sense’ politics.

Thus, my thesis examines critically the gendered and discursive consequences of the processes of democratization and post-transformation from a feminist point of view. The dissertation argues that the post-1989 political and economic changes have not transformed the underlying gender relations in the country, but instead have allowed for the addition of new forms of exclusion and inequality for significant groups by the state and its politics. By examining how gender is deployed in such discourses in the Polish parliament now, it shows how Polish politics continually reproduces existing patterns of domination and inequality, thus paving the way for the anti-gender and anti-diversity mobilizations that Poland has been recently witnessing.

Research gap and puzzle

The topic of gender and politics in Eastern Europe is not a dominant strand of political science research today. Moreover, as Georgina Waylen (2007) argued, the mainstream democratization literature has always been gender-blind (or seemingly gender-neutral), saying little to nothing about the participation of women in transformation processes to democracy. However, there have been important feminist analyses that

have set out to rectify this situation, Waylen's *Engendering Transitions* (2007) being one of them.

Specifically, gendered analyses of Eastern European politics have come in two major waves: first, in the years immediately following the collapse of state socialism in the region and, secondly, in the early 2000s, when a number of the former Eastern bloc countries were about to enter the European Union.¹² Post-state socialist legacies in Eastern Europe are discussed at length among others in Suzanne LaFont's (2001) and Peggy Watson's (1997) work, Barbara Einhorn's book *Cinderella goes to market: citizenship, gender, and women's movements in East Central Europe* (1993) and in the edited volumes by Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller (1993) and Sue Bridger (1999). The implications of applying the EU *acquis* for gender equality in new accession countries from Eastern Europe are explored in detail in, for example Bretherton (2001), Avdeyeva (2009, 2010, 2015), Lohmann and Seibert (2003), Sloat (2004), Watson and Lindenberg (2002), and Krizsan et al. (2014). This scholarship focussed on the implications of the adoption of EU gender equality standards by accession states and the supposed impact of gender mainstreaming in the region.

Importantly, the first wave of literature focused on conceptualizing pre-transformation gender realities in Eastern Europe and then the immediate aftermath of democratization. Although women in the region did not experience the rise of feminist movements such as those that had a powerful impact on political and social science thinking since the 1970s in the West, many feminist commentators assumed that Eastern Europe would collectively develop a feminist consciousness and follow the Western example. Initially, Western groups of feminist scholars and activists thought that the social upheaval of the transformation processes would allow Eastern European women to mobilize themselves and fight the patriarchal gender regime (predating and reinforced in state socialist times) (Funk 1993; Regulska 1998; Wöhrer 2004; Beckwith 2007). However, to the surprise and dismay of many, this did not happen as predicted. In fact, on a societal level, Eastern Europe experienced (and to a large degree

¹² For a discussion of pre-state socialist gender realities see for instance: Wolchik and Meyer (1985).

is still experiencing) a rejection of everything that is even vaguely connected with their understanding of feminism (Verdery 1994; Sperling 2014).

In trying to explain the rejection of state socialism in Eastern Europe, both Polish and Anglophone feminists, saw a parallel resurgence of right-wing political preferences that brought a reconfiguration of identity. Following 1989, in the situation of floating identities that the regime change produced, people were left in search of notions of ‘return to tradition’ or ‘retraditionalization’ (Funk 1993; Magyan-Vincze 2006; Gerber 2011). This often meant a romanticization of patriarchal values and of strong traditional families as bases for a healthy society (Zvinkliene 1999). As Alexandra Gerber argued (2011: 490), feminist political scientists have been addressing the issues of ‘remasculinization’ and ‘retraditionalization’ in Eastern Europe since the fall of state socialism (Graff 2005; Moghadam 1995; Watson 1993b), particularly in view of EU requirements to implement gender equality directives.

All apparent facets of state socialism had to be overthrown in the transformation. As scholars like Sue Bridger (1999), Ann Graham and Joanna Regulska (2006), Agnieszka Graff (2008a), and recently Valerie Sperling (2014) argued, feminism in the East became a ‘dirty word’ after the fall of state socialism, owing to a specific set of circumstances created (or perpetuated) in the state socialist times. The phenomenon was also connected with the general belief that politics was discredited. Thus, there was a lack of faith in the public sphere in the region (Eisenstein 1993).

Feminist theorists have demonstrated the centrality of gender to the creation of markets, civil society, and democratic institutions. However, those theorizing European integration tended to assume that the power of conditionality and compliance in the pre-accession period would lead automatically to more gender equality and prevent ultraconservative entrenchment (Buzan and Little 2000; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). The expectations in terms of improved gender equality through gender mainstreaming and EU accession came both from Polish feminist activists and from the EU itself (Grabowska 2014). The European Commission understood gender mainstreaming and anti-discrimination to be part of

the ‘Copenhagen criteria’ that had to be met prior to EU accession (Presidency Conclusions 1993).¹³

At the same time, gendered research focused on EU’s role in the ‘Europeanization of gender equality’ (Lombardo and Forest 2012; Sindbjerg Martinsen 2007) and on processes of social learning and socialization of EU soft norms through non-binding instruments (Beveridge 2012; Forest and Lombardo 2012; Krizsan and Popa 2010). A whole body of gender equality policy literature analysed equality institutions and bodies (McBride and Mazur 2010; Outshoorn and Kantola 2007; Squires 2007; Stetson and Mazur 1995) and anti-discrimination enforcement mechanisms (Krizsan 2006; Krizsan et al. 2014; Lustgarten 1980; MacEwen 1997).

Arguably, according to the general opinions widespread among the Polish population, there is not much sexist discrimination, just a ‘natural’ division of gender roles (Graff 2008a). According to a government survey conducted by the office of the Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment in 2012, only 10% of respondents claimed to have experienced worse treatment due to their gender.¹⁴ In contrast to these opinion polls, statistics point to the fact that there is widespread systemic and structural exclusion of women and sexual minorities in Eastern Europe. Recent data from the Global Gender Gap Index show a persistent gender gap between women and men at all levels of political, social and economic life in Poland.¹⁵ Women have worse access to education, wealth, positions of power in terms of professional development, more restrictive

¹³ The membership criteria took the name from the June 1993 European Council in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Presidency conclusions stated that: Membership requires that candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/cop_en.pdf (accessed October 2016).

¹⁴ Available at: <http://www.sprawnik.pl/aktualnosci,10223,11971,jaka-jest-dyskryminacja-w-polsce-badanie> (accessed September 2016).

¹⁵ The Global Gender Gap Index (GGI) was introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006. It provides a framework for capturing the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities. The GGI benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education- and health-based criteria, and provides country rankings each year. At the time of writing, the newest (2014) report classifies 142 countries and ranks them on a scale from 0 to 1 (from 0 to 100%) in terms of gender equality.

access to health care, and less personal safety. In 2014, Poland ranked 57th (a drop of four places since 2012) out of 142 countries globally. Women earn 23% less than men (GUS 2009). The lack of equality between women and men is also visible in terms of women's political representation. Rueschemeyer and Wolchik (2009) have demonstrated that high-level representation of women in political positions and public administration in the region of Eastern Europe is below that of most post-industrial Western Europe. Accordingly, during the parliamentary term under analysis in this dissertation (2011-2015) and well over 90 years after women won both active and passive voting rights in Poland, women made up 18% of all Polish parliamentarians.¹⁶

European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency's report 'Homophobia and Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation in the EU Member States' ranked Poland as one of the worst countries in the EU for the LGBTQ+ community. A public opinion poll from February 2014 found that 70% of Poles believed same-sex sexual activity is morally unacceptable, with only 22% believing it morally acceptable (CBOS 2014). While there is no official criminalization of same-sex sexual activities, there is also no legal recognition of same-sex couples, even though same-sex marriage is not constitutionally banned. Article 32 of the Polish Constitution guarantees equality in accordance with law and prohibits discrimination for 'any reason'. Anti-discrimination provisions were added to the Labour Code in 2003, but the specific proposals to include a prohibition of discrimination and hate speech/ crimes on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender expression or identity were rejected numerous times since, following strong catholic church objections.

Therefore, the legal and social status quo in terms of gender equality and anti-discrimination are a combination of reluctant pre-accession updates to Polish law and legacies of the Polish People's Republic (PRL). The official numbers concerning the formal structures of politics and economy show socio-political inequality in terms of gender in the region, which can be the result of a combination of pre-PRL legacies and

¹⁶ Women won voting rights (passive and active) in 1918 after the declaration of independence of the Second Republic.

post-transformation reconfiguration of gender roles (see a further discussion in chapters 2 and 4).

Current empirical work has indicated that, foremost among the post-state socialist Eastern European states, Poland has pursued policies reflecting an anti-feminist backlash and anti-gender equality backlash (Gerber 2011; Glass and Kawachi 2001; Pascall and Kwak 2005). The discourse of the ‘war on gender’ was a new addition to the previous anti-feminist discourses that have been present in Europe, especially since the late 1980s, and which are connected to the purging of perceived ‘communist’ practices in Eastern Europe and to the backlash after the transformation and Europeanization.

While the recent anti-gender discourse is religious organization-driven, but is willingly followed and expanded on by politicians, its virulence and the commitment with which it is applied in politics requires further investigation. It is important to discuss how this discourse impacts the work in politics. It may force progressive politicians and activists to abandon vocalizing points that might be labelled as ‘feminist’ or ‘gendered’, thereby discarding or pushing women’s and LGBTQ+ rights and other minority topics down or off political agendas. The result of this is a closing down and cementation of discursive space in the form of, at best, ridiculing these themes, at worst, treating them as dangerous, with politicians not willing to risk their political authority for progressive legislative bills. The creation of derogatory labels for people who raise feminist and minority concerns makes room for hate speech in politics and in society around it. This has material effects on the processes of construction of political problems in parliamentary debates and agenda-setting.

It is therefore essential to take gendered analysis into account, if we want to understand the quality and equality of Polish politics. However, the available feminist and political science literature focused, on the one hand, on the processes of transformation and democratization and, on the other hand, on the adoption and expectations regarding the implementation of EU soft norms regarding equality and gender mainstreaming. While mainstream political science scholarship still misses out on gender political analysis, feminist research has not fully explained why the Polish gender equality

situation has not improved and in fact has been recently deteriorating ('war on gender'). Hence, this dissertation switches the attention from equality policy adoption and implementation to the analysis of political discourses and their power at work in the creation of discursive values and subjects that provide blueprints of femininity, masculinity, and heteronormativity for the society.

Because of the lack of connections between critical Polish and mainstream political science literature, it has not yet been fully researched why Poland fell and is falling back in terms of progress on (gender) equality. The available scholarly analyses tend to build on each other insufficiently and miss the insights that can be gained from bridging 'Western' theoretical contributions with Polish interpretative knowledge. Therefore, I specifically build on and apply Polish and Eastern European scholarship and combine it with personal, 'local' experience (for a further discussion of reflexivity see chapter 3). By engaging in the debates on democratic transformations and anti-feminist backlash, I also contribute to the literature on the connections between post-state socialism and post-colonialism. Specifically, I reconsider the complex position of Eastern Europe (as a specific set of politico-spatial locations, but also as a group of imagined spaces and their attendant ideologies) in the processes of Europeanization and soft norm diffusion. The subsequent analysis is an example of a discussion of the ambiguities in centre-margin power relations in the context of economic globalization today.

Moving between global, regional, and local perspectives, the thesis focuses on Poland as a case and then zooms into the Polish parliamentary discourses as the crucial site of national politics. I demonstrate that Poland's recent bout of 'war on gender' (2012-2014), while following wider global backlash trends, shows that the post-1989 political and economic regime changes have not resulted in transforming the underlying gender relations in the state and its politics. The main research question is: *What is the role of gender in the construction of discursive exclusion and marginalization?* I specifically look at the parliament, as the arena, where I examine the anti-equality and anti-diversity backlash through the lens of gendered subjects in order to find out: *Why and how do the gendered discourses construct subjects and values? What is the*

relationship between these discourses and the processes of democratization and Europeanization? What are the underlying constructions of femininity, masculinity, and heteronormativity?

Main insights

Feminist political research has been trying to destabilize existing categories, binaries, and oppositions (Celis et al. 2013: 14). Gender studies scholars have argued that existing categories and concepts legitimate exclusion and need to be rethought, examining how gendered power relationships construct citizenship and the nation, the state, and bureaucracy (Lister 2003; Yuval-Davis 1998; Squires 1999; Kantola 2006). This highlights why the construction of subjects and values has consequences for the state, nation, and its politics. Following this call, the focus should shift from women's presence in and exclusion from different institutions to understanding the gendered structures of those institutions – the 'constitutive representation of gender' – and how to transform them (Celis et al. 2013: 14, 18).

Thus, institutions, like parliaments and their norms, discourses, and rules of behaviour are not just gendered, but also gendering: 'they produce the very gendered subjects of politics' (Celis et al. 2013: 14-15). Power is therefore productive and creative (Foucault 1980) and it 'lures us to fulfil the standards of normative femininities and masculinities' (Celis et al. 2013: 15). This implies that those, who do not live up to or fulfil the gendered prescriptions and proscriptions for nation and family or subjectivity are discursively pushed out – their prerogatives 'lose out' in the mainstream narrative.

I argue that the way in which political discourses construct gendered subjects and values within the parliamentary institutional arena influences and perpetuates the anti-gender and anti-equality backlash witnessed in Poland recently. Political discourses in the Polish parliament construct categories of subjects and values purposefully deploying gender, which outline boundaries and hierarchies that people (consumers of discourse) need to live up to. Hence, Polish politicians employ gendered discourses to delineate notions of 'proper' femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. As I show later in

the dissertation, gender is central to the discursive construction of the family (chapter 5) and to nation-building (chapter 6).

Following Polish scholarly analyses, I argue that transformation and Europeanization were forces for economic globalization in Poland. They were implemented according to orthodox neoliberal principles and reinforced the peripheral position of Poland's economy in the global economic system – as a provider of industrial subcomponents for transnational companies and cheap labour within Europe. Consequently, transformation, like globalization, produced actual economic (and political) losers (women, former public employees, former working class, etc.). As I discuss further in chapter 4, 'democratic and economic transition' was exacted through wholesale privatization of most state assets, liberalization of trade and business relationships, cutting back on education, health care, pensions and all parts of the public sector, which the establishment of formal liberal democracy was supposed to make up for. The hopes were for the dissemination of a set of traditional liberal values of civil rights, tolerance, equality, and respect for individualism to come naturally through a complete *laissez-faire* ideology. At the same time, neoliberal market capitalism was presented as a transparent, 'natural' ideology, the departure from which or even the questioning of which was an aberration (Pietrzak, 2016).

Polish scholars like Monika Bobako, Ewa Charkiewicz, Agnieszka Mroziak, Andrzej Leder, Jarosław Pietrzak, and Jan Sowa and Anglophone academics such as David Ost have been pointing to the fact that this has produced masses of disappointed and marginalized groups that mirror wider developments between the centre and the (semi)periphery in global capitalist relations (which I analyse further in chapters 2 and 4). However, going beyond transformation and Europeanization, today the language of mainstream political debate in Poland remains stigmatizing, hierarchical, and exclusionary, discursively constructing more categories of subjects and values that 'lose out'. Throughout the transformation process and after it, certain social groups (discursive categories of subjects) were forced into positions of being 'losers' in the

social and political system. The resulting societal anger, disappointment, and a wish for revindication had to ‘go somewhere’ and find an outlet.

The thesis is informed by the idea that there are ‘two monstrous machines’ (cf. Charkiewicz 2006) of Polish transformation and Europeanization processes, which I discuss in chapter 4. These two hegemonic constructions in Poland – the neoliberal and the nationalist-catholic one – both use gendered notions of subjectivity and values in ways that perpetuate catholic and conservative social conventions and channel social discontent towards particular social groups (i.e. women, ethnic and sexual minorities, etc.). The focus of the dissertation in the empirical sections of the work is on the nationalist-catholic discourses that are essential in constructing both the family and the nation in the Polish case. The neoliberal reforms form an important background for the analysis in the dissertation, hence chapter 4 discusses this context in more detail. Importantly, the research focuses not only on women in politics, but on what roles specific notions of gender identities (like femininities, masculinities, and heteronormativity for instance) play in political discourse.

Therefore, my analysis examines both women and men. I am interested in the values that politicians invoke and produce when they do politics, what roles they present and prescribe to the public, how they describe and ‘do’ gender using it to justify political behaviours and choices. The hegemonic discourses (by constructing categories of hierarchy and power) provide a ready framework of exclusion and marginalization that allows for scapegoating and using whole groups and categories of minorities for political expediency (when popular anger or discontent needs to be rerouted). The marginalizing and hierarchic nature of the hegemonic discourses, as well as the ready availability of ‘losing’ discursive subjectivities (go-to frames of meaning), has allowed the ‘war on gender’ to become so prominent and viral. The political discursive field, already ubiquitous with stigma, inequality, and exclusion, merely needed a new scapegoat. Gender provided this scapegoat, within a broader illiberal backlash against liberal democracy, globalization, economic inequality, etc. (i.e. as a cypher of this backlash – see chapter 7).

The dissertation then examines the use of gendered parliamentary discourses in constructing subjects and values in Polish politics, asking how MPs in parliament chose to wield concepts of femininity, masculinity, and heteronormativity as tools in political debates. Beneath this inquiry rests a premise about the creation of modern political subjects through the often-invisible practices of power (cf. Verdery 2012). Talking and debating creates and constructs individuals as subjective selves, thus, discourses can fabricate subjectivities (Jaworski and Coupland 1999: 412-13). Hence, the dissertation focuses on how nationalist-catholic discourses are deployed in parliament by particular political forces and, in turn, how the deployment of such discourses reinforces the creation of ‘losing’ subjectivities.

The thesis argues that parliamentary discourses create notions of gendered national subjects and values, which is later reflected in terms of policy and legislation. I do not claim that the discourses produce actual groups in society, but instead show the ‘reflexive perspective on the political’ (Kulawik 2009: 263). Critical and gendered research of the discursive construction of subjects focuses on a broad range of actions. I examine the noisy and visible rhetoric of nationalists, ultraconservatives, and anti-feminist utterances as well as what are considered ‘normal’ discursive strategies of MPs. These discursive strategies and constructions produce gendered dispositions and lay down the ‘rules of the game’.

I argue that, in Poland, political actors apply discursive power to construct gendered political values and subjects, drawing upon the availability and general tacit acceptance of sexist, misogynist, and chauvinist language, which is possible because of particular features of the Polish historical, economic, political, and cultural landscape, as well as the country’s socio-economic position in Europe after 1989 (cf. Sperling 2014). I explore the gendered hegemonic discourses as sources for informal institutional frames of meaning, which produce a Polish model of gendered subjectivity/citizenship that is unequivocally male (masculinity discursively constructed as a standard and blueprint for conduct) and catholicized. In other words, I explore gendered discourses as means of constructing losing subjects and outsiders by right-wing, nationalist, but also liberal and conservative forces.

Hence, the dissertation suggests three main insights. Firstly, the Polish case helps us to understand the use of gendered discourse employed to construct subjectivities as part of post-transformation Polish politics. Secondly, these subjectivities entail notions of femininity, masculinity, and heteronormativity, which are affected by and situated in entrenched discursive understandings of nation, transformation, and post-state socialism. Hence, the thesis highlights how these gendered notions relate to the concepts of nation, transformation, Europeanization, and post-state socialism, which are central in scholarly literature on Eastern Europe. Thirdly, the understanding of these gendered dynamics is important for the study of democracy and European politics, as they are some of their essential constituents.

Contributions

Based on these insights, the thesis makes several contributions to the scholarly debate. The primary theoretical contribution of the thesis concerns the elaboration and the application of gendered analysis to political discourse. Feminist political analysis has long held the position that social phenomena cannot be explained without taking gender into account. The focus of this dissertation moves from equality policy analysis, dominant in the available literature, to the exploration of the gendered power of discourse. Thus, this work is about what gender does in utilitarian terms – as it is used and deployed in certain discursive power projects. The second main theoretical contribution concerns the exploration of trajectories and legacies of transformation processes, specifically combining transnational and Polish literature. I combine the different bodies of literature and use them to elucidate the key mechanisms of discursive production, reproduction, and backlash in gendered terms.

The combination of feminist, postcolonial, political economy, institutionalist approaches also constitutes a theoretical innovation in the study of post-transformation politics in Eastern Europe. The discussions in chapters 2 and 4 especially provide a synthetic way of engaging with (post-)transformation legacies and with critical junctures in terms of Europeanization and its impacts on gender equality. I discuss national and regional trends that are specific to post-state socialist societies, moving

between different layers and levels in order to combine comparative and regionalist literature with feminist, postcolonial, institutionalist, and democratization theory.

Therefore, I adapt the critical Polish political literatures to critique the prevailing, but flawed, theoretical assumptions according to which the implementation of a neoliberal economy and the formal adoption of European values and soft norms concerning anti-discrimination and gender mainstreaming would lead to improved equality standards. Instead, the dominant narratives in Polish politics show that gender discrimination and inequality is still a pervading issue. In chapter 4 specifically, I show that the dominant neoliberal thinking has contributed to perpetuating the issue, by portraying the gendered social protection mechanisms and rights (parental leave, reproductive health rights, institutionalized public care, etc.) as at odds with economic efficiency.

Furthermore, the dissertation adds to the literature analysing the backlash against gender equality and anti-discrimination, which is led by deeply entrenched conservative forces that see gender equality standards as the influence of much-disliked Europeanization (as a stand-in and focus point of globalization). Thus, the combined effect of transformation and the re-affirmation of nationalist and ultraconservative values in a post-state socialist context leads, at best, to the perpetuation of gender discrimination. At worst, it produces a full-scale backlash against the piecemeal measures for gender equality introduced on paper during Europeanization.

The main methodological contribution lies in the application and operationalization of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to the study of a Polish institution, as much of this work revolves around discourses and their critical analysis in the context of parliamentary politics. An important methodological contribution consists of the suggestion that to operationalize Fairclough's CDA, 'local' interpretative knowledge is necessary (cf. Donna Haraway's 1988 'situated knowledge'). In order to complement the understanding of social practice of discourses, I use the cognitive resources that are available to the discursive audience in Poland, who are ultimately the consumers of the political discourses (for details, see chapter 3). Furthermore, I

reflect on and apply the insight that concrete notions of politics reproduce particular kinds of gendered subjects; the ways in which femininities and masculinities are produced as part of the political process in the specific discursive case of Poland (Saward 2010; Childs and Webb 2012; Celis et al. 2013: 18). This dissertation is thus an explicit answer for the call for more research that examines the role that parliamentary discourses about gender and sexuality play in constituting gender equality (Lombardo and Forest 2012; Celis et al. 2013).

On the empirical level, the Polish case is important because it elucidates the impact of gendered discourses on processes of democratization and of ultraconservative backlash against gender equality and diversity and wider centrifugal forces in Europe. This work shows how Europeanization and democratization processes applied in Poland, with a specific neoliberal market spin, focused on legal and economic issues and left ultraconservative forces and the catholic church to define the values and subjects. I specifically address the problem of the role of the catholic church in the Polish political context and argue that the anti-gender equality and anti-diversity mobilizations are cyphers for broader backlash against Europeanization and transformation processes. The aim is to depict the prominence of these processes and capture the Polish parliament as a time- and space-specific institutional snapshot, providing it with historic and social context (chapter 4). This outlines the limits, scope, and basis for the construction and employment of discourses within Polish politics today, providing sources for the public's interdiscursivity and common frames of meaning for political actors and consumers of political discourse.

Research aims and justification

The dissertation sets out to connect the theoretical literature on (post-)transformation with an empirical analysis of current parliamentary discourses that are crucial in structuring contemporary political life in Poland. It assesses the gendered political impact of the constructed subjects and values by combining specific theoretical approaches. The thesis argues that it is impossible to determine a universal and indivisible truth about the power structure under analysis. All the while, it is vital to consider the historical and contextual dynamic underlying the political debates which

tend to exclude or subordinate discursively certain groups or subjects vis-à-vis others. As Watson (2000a: 186) argues, '[b]ecause feminism cannot be understood except in its historical context, and because in post-communism that context itself stands in need of explicit theorization, exploring the possibilities of meaning for feminism goes hand in hand with a conceptualization of transition in the former Soviet Bloc.' So, there is an explicit call for a contextualized and historicized gendered analysis of transformation and post-transformation. The intention, thus, is to add to the knowledge about post-state socialist gender realities by looking at the gender discourses in a specific political site – the Polish parliament.

The goal of the dissertation is to understand how gender, but also its intersections with class, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and other social categories work discursively together and how these power relations construct subjects and values in discourse, thereby perpetuating and renewing the forces working against gender equality. By exploring the discourses that MPs use in communicative events and specific utterances in debates, I focus on how power operates through discourse to establish the dominance of certain constructions of gender relations and to marginalize or exclude counter-discourses (Freidenvall and Krook 2011: 49). The gendered discursive perspective enables the questioning of the ways in which gender is used to create social hierarchies and marginalize social groups along classificatory lines and social positions. Therefore, I use critical discourse analytical tools, which allow me to identify the dominant topics and themes, and set the boundaries of discourses. I examine the discursive construction of key subjects in debates on national identity and sovereignty, family and welfare, and the 'war on gender'.

Why Poland?

The focus of this research suggests that its outcome is symptomatic of the national, Polish context. However, arguably it also shows wider regional and transnational trends of anti-equality and antidemocratic backlash that Europe has been experiencing in the recent years. Similar trends have been identified in other Eastern European countries after the fall of state socialism, such as Russia or Slovakia, but importantly

the Polish situation differs in that the power of the catholic church vis-à-vis the state is stronger due to the role it played after 1989 and thanks to the deference of Polish politicians (as I discuss in chapter 4). Also in countries such as Croatia, Italy, France, Lithuania, Slovakia, Latvia, and Slovenia, the post-war and post-1989 consensus on human rights and civil liberties is currently threatened as issues such as gender mainstreaming, sexual education, LGBTQ+ rights, and reproductive health rights have come under coordinated attacks carried out by the church, religious and lay conservative NGOs, right-wing politicians, and even grassroots mobilizations (Kovats and Põim 2015).

However, in Poland, specifically, the rise of religious *ressentiment* and nationalism are interwoven and mutually constitutive. As I show in detail in chapters 4 and 7, Polish political elites have readily supported and often used narratives of religion and nationalism, in order to attempt to divert people's attention from the social consequences of neoliberal reforms (implemented under the guise of transformation and Europeanization) with the help of moral panic strategies and offering scapegoats.

Thus, the research on Poland as a focus case contributes to the wider debates on the resistances and blockages to equality legislation. The norms and public discourses observed regionally have a specific expression in the Polish parliament. It is a peculiarity of post-PRL politics, but most importantly it is politics in a contemporary parliamentary democracy, with the destructive forces of the crises induced by neoliberal reforms in the 1990s (the 'shock therapy'), economic globalization and its societal consequences. Local political and economic elites implemented the post-1989 regime change, the so-called 'transition', according to the ruling spirit of the late 1980s and early 1990s – neoliberal market orthodoxy and the 'end of history', to which 'there is no alternative'. In Poland, the general population was not consulted on the trajectories or processes that were being put into force or on the features of the expected 'end product' regime of the transformation.

The parliamentary focus

The Polish parliament is the main site of production of political discourses and thereby of political subjects and values. Hence, this is a study of the construction of gendered subjects and values as they emerge in political discourses in parliamentary debates during one term of the Polish parliament (*Sejm*). At the same time, it is a study of politics, of how discourses within an institutional context produce and reproduce ideological structures that are gendered and have power implications that regulate life in a contemporary European state. The Polish *Sejm* provides a lens to interrogate wider phenomena of gendered backlash against equality (gender equality as well as sexual and gender minorities' rights). It highlights the discursive power of these phenomena and places them in the context of feminist debates.

Parliamentary debates not only mirror the prevailing norms and discourses of wider society, but first and foremost they construct and reinforce the discourses that are subsequently transmitted to the public. Parliamentary politics are thus central to the production of discourses in parliamentary democracies. The parliament is especially valid and interesting as a locus for research because, besides being a formal legislature for the state, it is also an important forum to express opinions, values and interests (Kantola 2006). Furthermore, legislatures are 'privileged discursive sites' and discourses originating from such sites attain special authority and significance for whole societies (Prado 1995). In Eastern Europe, and in Poland specifically, parliaments have been serving as the central sites for the resolution of major national issues (Montgomery 2003: 4).

Accordingly, the thesis argues that, in the Polish context, the parliament is the primary site for doing politics. As a parliamentary democracy (further discussion of the Polish political system can be found in chapter 3), Polish politics rests on the primacy of the *Sejm*. The main public concerns, debates, and policy issues are first and foremost tackled in parliament and shape the wider views in society. Even though the media, the executive, and public opinion play a role in this process, their analysis is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Nonetheless, the *Sejm* is a proxy for all Polish politics

and a lens to analyse it. The focus is thus on the discourses of parliament and the work it does in generating insider and outsider groups ('losers'). The thesis builds upon the discursive turn in feminist analysis in order to find out how gender subjects are discursively produced following political transformation processes and why this institutionalizes the exclusion of non-normative and nondominant groups in politics in Poland. It combines these insights with wider discussions of poststructuralist discourse theory (Bacchi 1999; 2005).

The dissertation then focuses on the notion of the continuous construction of feminine, masculine, and heteronormative subjectivities within and across political debates. Like other identities, gender can be mediated through 'dominant' or hegemonic and 'subversive' or alternative discourses of, for instance, femininity. A female subject can be constructed as a mother who gives up work to care for the household and children, adopting a dominant discourse, or she can be presented as working professionally outside the home or as not having children (alternative discourse). Political actors can employ gendered discourses and values taking advantage of cultural understandings and 'frames' that resonate with people. These include gendered constructions of subjects relying on femininity, masculinity, and heteronormativity. Following a Gramscian understanding, such hegemonic ideas (about how women and men are supposed to look, behave, and interact) are powerful and get reinforced by political authorities and citizens alike (Sperling 2014: 11).

I see the parliament as having the discursive power to define the topics of political contestation, as well as what belongs there and what does not. The social and political blueprints of prestige and aspiration that are created within a discursive field are transposed into the choice of topics, the construction of arguments, and the choice of spokespeople, thereby shaping the debate, and influencing the consumption of socio-economic and political reality. According to the pleas of Polish feminists, there is a need to expose the auto-referential nature of these discourses and debates and their alienation from the surrounding world (Bobako 2011; Charkiewicz 2006; 2010). When 'creating' the world through discourse, deputies refer mostly to each other, constructing a closed circuit of discourse and a hermetic code legible to the insiders

only. They repeatedly create narratives about the same things that get constructed and transmitted in the same ways, and are addressed to the same recipients. Parliamentary debates are a closed, discursively inbred structure that uses its available tools to try to objectivize and naturalize the rules of its own field and as such impose them on the broader, societal audience.

Timeframe: the 2011-2015 parliamentary term

This dissertation focuses exclusively on the seventh parliamentary term (2011-2015), as a particular point in the post-transformation period. It catches an ‘ethnographic moment’ to show the features of discourses and subjects specific to a given time and place. The main political competition was then between the main government party and the main opposition party, both claiming to be descended politically from the Solidarity movement (for more details see chapters 3 and 4). In fact, arguably, the whole political debate in Poland has been constructed around the opposition between these two party blocs in the post-accession phase (see chapter 4).

The timeframe of analysis was a moment of relative political and parliamentary stability – it was the second term of the same political coalition in government (a ‘one-off’ situation since 1989). Following a rather fragmented and changeable political party system in the 1990s, the late 2000s were a period of the establishment of main political divisions that dominate and persist in Polish politics today. The key rivalry of the post-Solidarity parties was the main political line of argument in parliament (see chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of political parties in the seventh parliamentary term).

Post-state socialism, post-communism, and post-transformation

The specific historical, economic, political, and cultural landscape of Poland, as well as the consequences of the country’s socio-economic position in Europe post-1989, are one of the central points of this inquiry. In this dissertation, I am mapping out the

gendered discourses in the specific socio-historical context of the country after the fall of the people's republic. I purposefully prefer the term 'post-state socialist' to the term 'post-communist', following the recent developments in Polish scholarship (cf. Sowa 2015: 110-121). I consciously use the term 'state socialist', as opposed to 'socialist' to avoid any connotations with the Nordic or Scandinavian welfare states for instance or the social-democratic Western European tradition. The discussion on the accuracy of calling the Soviet bloc 'socialist', 'Marxist-Leninist', 'communist', 'actually existing socialism' notwithstanding, I consider the term 'communism' so heavy and burdened in terms of Polish internal political debates that it becomes conceptually empty as a signifier. Positioning myself in between Western and Eastern scholarship, I cannot use the term post-communist (even though I realize it is the accepted term in most Western academia), because of its conceptual emptiness in Eastern Europe and the rejection of its use in the region as practically synonymous with evil, criminal, and totalitarian. Similarly, it is also a semantic choice to use 'transformation' instead of transition, because of the implied teleological commitment of the latter (see the relevant discussion in the following chapter).

Thesis structure

The dissertation is divided into eight chapters. The introductory chapter presented the main research questions, highlighted the significance of the topic under analysis and the intended theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions of the dissertation. The next three chapters provide a theoretical, conceptual, historical, and methodological background for the case study. Chapter 2 discusses the various literatures and theoretical approaches that inform my analysis. It provides a 'conceptual toolkit' that provides the dissertation with literature insights relevant to identifying the excluded and scapegoated subjectivities and values in Polish politics. Chapter 3 provides the methodological scaffolding and the research design of the dissertation. I explain the main tenets of CDA, its operationalization, as well as a more detailed discussion of the Polish parliament and the data sources.

Chapter 4 outlines the transformation, democratization, and Europeanization contexts and the ways they produced gendered inequalities in the process. Bearing in mind the

theoretical categories that tend to get excluded and stigmatized from the second chapter, this part pinpoints post-1989 legacies and identifies critical junctures and historic trajectories of transformation and democratization. Importantly, this chapter also provides an examination of the role of the catholic church in Poland. The point is to provide contextual and background material in order to analyse the possible sources for the discourses that I examine in the following part. Next, chapters 5-7 present the discursive analysis of the debates on the family and welfare (chapter 5), national identity and the construction of the nation (chapter 6), and lastly the ‘war on gender’ (chapter 7).

In order to narrow in on the particulars of the Polish case, the following two empirical chapters focus on ‘traditional’ interest areas of feminist political research – family and welfare (chapter 5) and the nation and nationalism (chapter 6). Family politics is broadly defined as including reproductive and women’s health rights, civil partnerships, sexual education, religious education in schools. The analysis on welfare includes the debates concerning ongoing pension reforms, welfare reforms, budget cuts, and labour law changes.

The investigation of the construction of the nation examines the relationship between local and traditional commitments, on the one hand, and international/regional influences as posed by treaties and conventions, on the other. In particular, it focuses on the gendered dimension of this relationship and of constructions of the Polish nation. The empirical analysis exposes how the discourses that permeate parliamentary talk are not gender-neutral. To see what this means for legislative practice, it is vital to unpack and map the discursive understandings of gender in specific contexts (nationality, family politics and welfare) and follow them as they become political outcomes thereby legitimating specific gender power structures that reproduce discursive scapegoats and purposefully taint the image of and vilify whole social groups.

The final empirical focus area, the ‘war on gender’, deals with a specific instance of discourse which is not associated with any particular thematic debate, but has been

identified as an overarching feature while researching this project. It is a particular political and linguistic campaign that developed in the Polish parliament between 2012 and 2014 (called the ‘war on gender’). In this final empirical section, I also look for the parliamentary implications of the discussed ‘war on gender’ in Poland. As the church played an essential role in creating the anti-gender mobilization, one of the goals is to understand and interpret the relationship between church discourses and their influence in parliamentary politics in Poland. The focus is on the use of the newly coined terms ‘gender ideology’ or ‘genderism’ in order to enforce specific ultraconservative and traditional religious interests in politics.

The chapter includes a regional and global perspective that allows us to put into a broader context the gendered discourses in Polish parliament. This contextual analysis shows how certain trends that appear in Poland are not new and are part of a broader coalition of social and political actors that wants to roll back or block advances in terms of women’s rights and the rights of sexual minorities. The final chapter (8) reaches back to the issues raised in this introduction, reworks and connects the main themes of the dissertation and suggests potential future avenues of research in the field.

Chapter 2: The discursive construction of subjects and values: the conceptual and theoretical framework for the Polish case

‘The operation of transforming homo sovieticus into the Western man was conducted on/in the female body.’
Agnieszka Mrozik¹⁷

This chapter outlines the theoretical perspectives and conceptual understandings that inform my research. It aims to provide a ‘conceptual and theoretical toolkit’ that allows for the discursive gendering and creation of ‘losers’ by which I mean groups of subjects and values that can be scapegoated and vilified as a result of political and economic processes. I pull together the threads about exclusion, marginalization, and disempowerment that can later inform my analysis of the Polish processes of transformation and Europeanization. The chapter argues that a synthesis of literatures on nationalism and gender, Europeanization, post-colonialism, feminist institutionalism, and feminist political economy provides a suitable analytical framework of looking at the Polish case of backsliding on (gender) equality. Moreover, it helps us understand the wider questions posed by the thesis about the backlash against gender equality and diversity, as well as the role of discursive constructions of subjectivities in the Polish parliament.

The main concepts are introduced in the following sections, which are dedicated to the various scholarly approaches. The chapter ends with a discussion combining insights from the perspectives under analysis. The key questions I address here are: what are the disadvantaged groups and values according to the outlined approaches? How can the chosen theoretical and conceptual approaches work together? Why are they best suited to exploring the research puzzle of how certain gendered subjects and values are excluded and marginalized through discourse? I argue that the chosen approaches provide different facets of conceptualizing discursive inequality in post-transformation

¹⁷ ‘Operacja przekształcenia *homo sovieticus* w *Western man* została przeprowadzona na/w kobiecym ciele.’ From the 2012 book: *Akuszarki transformacji* by Agnieszka Mrozik.

Polish politics. Despite the differences, they are helpful in various ways to understand the key concepts of the thesis, hence my attempt at combining them and providing a comprehensive interpretation.

The opening quote hints at the main assumption of this chapter – that there is a gendered nexus between the state, the nation, and the subject, which was transformed in the processes of regime change and democratization that Poland underwent since 1989. I argue that to elucidate these developments the multiple frameworks applied in this dissertation point to different facets of the ‘multiple inequalities’ witnessed in Poland and discussed in the subsequent chapter in terms of discourse.

Since I use a variety of concepts from many contexts, this chapter begins with a discussion of the positionality of the approaches, using the concepts of ‘translated’ and ‘travelling’ theories. The chapter then follows with a general discussion of the notion of gendered subjects and goes on to add nationalism literature, feminist political economy, feminist institutionalist, postcolonial and dependency approaches in order to explore feminist, political, and socio-economic facets of potential exclusion and marginalization. The second part of this chapter tries to complement the discussed theories with the Polish context and analysis: focusing on the Polish story of Europeanization bearing in mind the post-state socialist/postcolonial, feminist institutionalist, and feminist political economic insights. As I summarize in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 at the end of this chapter, the combination of these literatures elucidates different aspects of how and why certain subjects and values become discursively political ‘losers’. The conceptual toolkit established in this chapter helps us to understand how exclusionist and scapegoating hegemonic discourses are created and maintained, as they reproduce themselves through the construction of political subjects.

Translated and travelling theories and the ‘East’–‘West’ divide¹⁸

I consciously used the terms ‘East’ and ‘West’ in quotation marks here. They are key concepts that weave in and out this dissertation. They are also often entangled in the literature, so I cannot neglect discussing them, especially because there remains ambiguity and variation in their use. Even though ‘East’ and ‘West’ come from geography, they do not necessarily strictly refer to geographic locations, but rather to the belongings of former political blocs, the ‘First’ and ‘Second’ worlds (Wöhrer 2004). This is evident, for example, when Prague is considered to be in the ‘East’, but Vienna in the ‘West’, Romania and Bulgaria are called ‘East’, but Greece is ‘West’ (Wöhrer 2004). Moreover, ‘East’ and ‘West’ carry connotations that are far from neutral and therefore questioning their unreflective usage as well as bearing in mind their political and historical heritage are essential (Wolff 1994). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to try to solve this ambiguity. However, the tensions between ‘East’ and ‘West’ are an important narrative that plays out in the discussions on transformation, Europeanization, and importantly, feminism (see for instance chapter 4).

What comes across in these discussions are the apparently dichotomous constructions of ‘East’ and ‘West’ (Wöhrer 2004; Navickaite 2016). Frequently, I refer to both terms myself, but my goal is to deconstruct (reconstruct) and reconfigure their uses and understandings, not to maintain their problematic implications and especially not to essentialize them. As argued by Veronika Wöhrer (2004), this tension comes from the fact that in the early 1990s many authors spoke about ‘Western feminists’ and ‘Eastern women’ and described differences between them or at times focused on the things they had in common (Regulska 1998). The main category of comparison was the belonging to an either ‘Eastern’ or ‘Western’ country (Wöhrer 2004: 64-76). Often, the differentiation between ‘East’ and ‘West’ were not only used as a binary opposition,

¹⁸See Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

but also as the most obvious and important point of difference. In comparison to this dichotomy, other differences (i.e. class, race, age, sexual orientation), appear to have been neglected (Wöhrer 2004). The categories of ‘East’ and ‘West’ referred to the former Cold War blocs, and were thus eventually replaced by ‘post-socialist’ and ‘capitalist’.¹⁹

Whereas most gender researchers in the ‘West’ can tend to pursue their work without having much knowledge about the ongoing gender debates and political developments in post-state socialist countries (of course with the exception of those who are specialized in this field and serve as ‘go-betweens’), scholars in ‘Central’ and ‘Eastern’ Europe (CEE) cannot do without knowing about developments in – at least some – ‘Western’ gender discourses (Regulska 1998; Wöhrer 2004: 8-9). This is a consequence of the fact that ‘Western gender studies’ form the mainstream, the ‘canon’ of all feminist knowledge. Even bearing in mind the ‘politics of location’ (cf. Rich 1986), feminist analysis readily maintained the hegemonic position of ‘Western feminist theory’, in which the post-state socialist condition is often lost, sometimes in favour of the ‘Third’ world (Koobak and Marling 2014).

Therefore, Eastern Europe has been, simply put, not of much concern within this canon. It seems that, within feminist political science (similarly to other, more mainstream, fields of social science research), there are some contexts that are considered more important, more general, context-neutral, or relevant for every scholar, and others that are regarded as less important or more special, ‘peculiar’ and therefore not so relevant for those who do not live there, or do not specialize with this area (Wöhrer 2004: 9). Hence, this makes up the context of my dissertation and the theoretical approaches I discuss below.

Importantly, this also raises the question of the relationship between post-state socialism and post-colonialism (discussed in detail below). Since the fall of the state socialist system and the intensified economic, political, and scientific cooperation across the former ‘iron curtain’, feminist researchers from Eastern Europe have

¹⁹ For a discussion of the term ‘state socialism’ vs. ‘state socialism’, see discussions in chapters 1 and 4.

pointed out similarities in the ways in which the 'Third World' and the (now former) 'Second World' are constructed by the 'First World'. Eastern European countries have been depicted as the underdeveloped and dependent opposite Western Europe, much like Africa or the Middle East were constructed in the classical colonial period (Bobako 2011).

Similarly, Nanette Funk (1993: 319-320) has argued that power imbalances also exist at the level of discourse, as 'East' has been discursively incorporated into the 'West' following EU enlargement: 'Western' feminist insights are hegemonic and risk suppressing and distorting post-state socialist women's concerns. Analysts have pointed out the lines of power differentials between 'Eastern' and 'Western' gender research.

The limited presence of post-socialist space in feminist discussions may be further explained by CEE's historical immersion in Western culture, although it is not perceived as belonging to the 'West' yet/any more (an exclusion emphasised also in the concept of 'New Europe', with its stress on the recent arrival of the CEE countries) (Koobak and Marling 2014: 334).

'Western' women, in speaking their own language, risk imposing standards of discourse and even provoking political and intellectual resentment (Funk 1993: 320). Similarly, Olga Toth (1993) argued that 'Western' feminists have distorted the situation in Eastern Europe in two ways: through envy in the claim that women in Eastern Europe had 'got it all' by a lucky strike after 1945 (free education, health care, reproductive rights, full employment, public childcare); and through pity, for the 'double' and 'triple' burdens that I discuss in detail in chapter 4 (working, caring for family, and political community engagement). The dichotomy between 'East' and 'West' (especially at media and mainstream political level) is also pervaded by negative popular stereotypes on both sides: American and 'old Europe' feminists as man-haters and, conversely post-state socialist women as simply having bought into sexism having subordinated themselves insipidly to the family (Funk 1993:32; cf. Penn 2014).

This situation is compounded by what Magdalena Grabowska (2016) has referred to as 'travelling theories' in post-state socialist feminism, where Eastern European scholars have to translate (both literally and figuratively) 'Western' research into their

regional and local contexts. This form of cultural borrowing has been prevalent since the development of gender studies during the 1990s, also in Poland; the expectations regarding the transformation, democratization, and Europeanization processes were a direct product thereof. The assumptions that the democratic transformation was supposed to be conducive to the rise of a feminist consciousness. Thus, democratization and Europeanization should have produced more gender equality and social inclusion and, if Europeanization and democratization were ‘deeper’ and their values more internalized, the situation would have resulted in more gender equality – all these claims were articulated while taking for granted that ‘West’ was the only possible point of reference.

This form of ‘intra-European colonization’ (Grabowska 2016) of Eastern Europe as the ‘little other’ (Wolff 1994) is currently being rejected or reconfigured. In this vein, recent ‘revisionist’ feminist insight from Eastern Europe (Kulawik 2011b; Daskalova 2007; Fidelis 2015; Funk 2014; Grabowska 2016) have turned towards subverting linear and teleological transformation narratives (Navickaite 2016). What is more, feminist scholars are trying to challenge the idea of Eastern European women as passive victims and are highlighting façade equality during state socialism by filling in the gaps in the narrative about gendered political developments since 1945 (see more detailed discussion in chapter 4). In Polish academia, there have been recent moves to revise this position and include state socialist times in the history of women’s movements, emancipation, and gendered research more generally in particular by the ‘go-betweens’ (see for instance: Fidelis 2015; Grzebalska 2014; Mroziak 2012; Funk 2014; Penn 2006, 2014). The focus is on elements of post-1945 continuity, even though the stress usually falls on the non-linearity of the phenomena.

Until now there was a conspicuous absence of the ‘Second World’ in ‘Western’ theory other than claims that, as a result of transformation, it was falling behind in modernization (Funk 1993). When arguing for a more ‘decolonial’ positioning of Eastern Europe in gender research, Koobak and Marling (2014: 333) argued along similar lines:

The most pertinent discourse that helps to naturalise the East–West difference is the persistent trope of post-socialist CEE feminist studies ‘lagging behind’

the West. Spatial and geopolitical differences are projected onto a temporal plane, with Eastern Europe perceived to be ‘catching up’.

Thus, the former state socialist bloc tends to get less attention in feminist scholarship, with the notable exception of the ‘go-betweens’. Today, the goal is to de-homogenize state socialism, transformation, and their legacies, but not to break with the translation of ‘Western’ theory about the ‘East’. Rather, it is about seeing the process as travelling theories that move back and forth between contexts and are developed by the intermediary researchers. The goal is the conscious, deconstructive, and transformative use of ‘Western’ concepts in the study of Eastern Europe. This dissertation follows the understanding that, while we need to translate the travelling theories into the ‘Eastern’ scholarly debate, they also go back and provide new conceptual insight in the ‘West’. To an extent, what I do in this chapter is filling ‘Western’ theories with and translating Polish scholarship to explore the Polish case.

Gendered subjects

Gender is arguably one of the range of overlapping and layered sociocultural contexts and categories within which both individuals and societies operate and mediate their subjectivity (Stapleton and Wilson 2004). In this dissertation, I follow an important aspect of what the feminist theorist Carol Cohn understands under the term *gender*:

(...) a symbolic system, a central organizing discourse of culture, one that not only shapes how we experience and understand ourselves as men and women, but that also interweaves with other discourses and shapes them – and therefore shapes other aspects of our world (...) [A symbolic system in which] human characteristics are dichotomized, divided into pairs of polar opposites that are supposedly mutually exclusive: mind is opposed to body; culture to nature; thought to feeling; logic to intuition; objectivity to subjectivity; aggression to passivity; confrontation to accommodation; abstraction to particularity; political to personal, ad nauseam. In each case, the first terms of the “opposites” is associated with male, the second with female. And in each case our society values the first over the second (1993: 228-229).

Following Cohn (1993: 228), I want to move the stress from gendered individuals to gendered discourses and therefore to the system of meanings, ways of thinking, and frames of understanding or reference that shape and identify how subjects understand,

mediate, and represent themselves. This is a crucial underlying assumption of the construction of gendered political subjects in discourse.

Gender is one of the most recognizable, accepted, and available aspects of identity. Arguably, gender relations are at the heart of cultural constructions of social identities and collectivities (such as the subjects that I am analysing) (Yuval-Davis 2001:126). In a society, dominant ideas about how women and men are 'supposed to' look, behave, and interact are perceived as obvious, understandable, and legitimate (Sperling 2014: 13). Accordingly, to take Lene Hansen's (2006) processes of *linking* and *differentiation*, we can observe how categories of 'woman', 'man' as well as 'femininity' and 'masculinity' are applied in political discourse. Hansen's discussion of identity (which can be applied to gender identity) shows how this concept is always relational and implies that identity is constructed through reference to something alien or opposite. Hence, identity discourses create categories of *self* and *other*, where the former will be constituted as superior or more important than the latter (Hansen 2006: 6). For instance, the category 'woman' can be conceptualized as different and inferior to the category 'man' by linking it to a range of language signs (Hansen 2006: 20).

Lene Hansen's analysis demonstrates this phenomenon by showing how the use of the term 'woman' gets defined and constructed through a process of linking with 'emotional', 'motherly', 'reliant' and 'simple'. At the same time the male series of links are: 'rational', 'intellectual', 'independent', and 'complex'. Therefore, meaning is constructed through the discursive juxtaposition between a privileged sign on the one hand and a devalued one on the other (Hansen 2006: 19). The *othering* of the category 'woman' (with its linked characteristics) leads to the subordination of this kind of identity construct as compared with the 'man' category and its links. Hence, how discourse (texts and language) actually constructs acceptable knowledge and identity becomes an empirical question in need of analysis (Hansen 2006: 8).

In the context of gendered analyses of politics, the notion of identity is often applied. However, it is a rather slippery and arguably over-used term, the definition of which varies from discipline to another (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 6). While identity is a useful term, not least because it relates to a sense of self in everyday use for people, it can be treated as misleadingly singular and fixed in time by researchers (Ivanic 1998:

11). In the case of my research focus, it would also prove a hurdle beyond the scope of this dissertation to trace the impact of parliamentary discourses on people's identities. By positioning myself within the interpretative tradition, I am not looking for causal connections or correlations how discourse creates identities.

For these reasons, instead of interrogating identity, I focus on the construction of *gendered subjects* or subjectivities, meaning that I am exploring the discursive constructs in politics, not their identity manifestations in society. I explore the production and distribution of discursive power, without necessarily insisting on causal mechanisms between the political discourses and their products. The discursive production of gendered subjectivities, I argue, involves the categorization, attribution or ascription of values and qualities to individuals or groups. The relationship between discourse and gendered subjects consists of 'semiotically construct[ing] (represent[ing]) reality without simultaneously identifying [oneself] and relating to other people in particular ways' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 50).

Therefore, my gendered subjects 'emerge from discourse' (Bucholtz 1999: 4). In other words, the ways people talk and debate and the way they speak to and about others 'turns individuals into subjective selves (...) Various private and institutional discourses are constitutive of us and others as social subjects (...) These discourses fabricate our subjectivities' (Jaworski and Coupland 1999: 412-13). The relationship is however a two-way process: the result of joint creation, involving both the producers and the audience (or consumers) of the discourse (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 41). As I discussed above, the way people talk to and about others can be seen as an affiliation, but the way we are spoken about is frequently significant too (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 23). This dialectical relationship means that the subjectivity of the consumers and producers of discourse is constantly shaped and reconfigured by the concepts and assumptions embedded in discourse and *vice versa* (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002:23; Horsman 1990).

So, if subjects are immersed within discourses, the result is both enabling and constraining. Individuals have agency to an extent in this process, forming and reconfiguring their own role in the discursive practice – this idea allows for both active

application and constraints on availability of discourses (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002). The analysis of this mediation entails an exploration of power relations between discourse producers and discourse consumers, in the case of this dissertation – the relations associated with institutional hegemonic power. For this reason, the idea of discourse mediating gendered subjects is a wide-ranging and powerful one (cf. Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 23-24).

As I discuss in more detail in chapter 3, the critical discursive approach that is employed in this dissertation is appropriate to the exploration of how power works in and influences framing processes within parliamentary debates. Power plays out in hegemonic discourses, which produce and limit the ‘truths’ that are available to us within specific contexts and times (cf. Foucault 1980). Hence, drawing on the Foucauldian perspective, power is also understood as productive, not just repressive (Foucault 1980). In the construction of gendered subjects, this kind of power is most effective when it forces us to fulfil the standards of normative femininities and masculinities available through hegemonic discourses. If power operates by both creating and restricting, producing and oppressing, through dominant discourses, then those ideas and narratives that express different options for change and transformation, make it difficult to challenge hegemonic groups and discourses. In this sense, the power of discourse, while enabling agency and producing legislative outcomes, also constrains the subjects’ potential for political agency (for more see a discussion of Fairclough’s power *in* discourse and power *behind* discourse in the following chapter). Thus, the power of discourse especially affects the possibility for actors to challenge existing hegemonic discourses.

A focus on gendered subjects is central to theorizing gender as socially and discursively constructed, a process in constant flux, which continually undergoes modification and negation (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 25). However, in a more poststructuralist vein, gender can also be understood as ‘performance’. This idea means that one ‘performs’, displays, represents, or enacts gender, as famously argued by Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* in 1990. As Sunderland and Litosseliti point out, the conceptual understanding of gender is not a question of either-or, but may be a matter of theoretical primacy (2002: 25), so a question of which theory one chooses.

Performativity, understood as doing one's gender, is a useful conceptualization, especially in sociological research regarding sexuality and gender expression. Gender, and what we perceive as feminine or masculine (or just 'normal' in reference to gender expression and sexuality), is enacted and wielded in contests over power and policy 'in forms we could refer to as "politicized masculinity and "politicized femininity"' (Sperling 2014: 11).

In politics and political research, even without drawing on concepts of theatricality and performance, much of the utterances and communications or political debates can be seen as a 'ritualized process which allows the participants to construct and project desirable versions of their identities, in a succession of performances targeted at specific audiences' (Jaworski and Coupland 1999: 407). Importantly, a given 'performance' does not guarantee that the consumers of discourse adopt the desired interpretation (for a more detailed discussion of interpretation see the following chapter). Constructing subjects is also a linguistic performance, so it brings up questions about terminology, choice, and intentionality (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 26). It can often be hard to draw a clear distinction between intentional (theatrical) performance and linguistic construction or categorization in political talk especially. Therefore, while being informed by notions of performativity, the stress in this dissertation is on the construction of values and subjects, and not on the MPs' specific performance of gender.

Drawing from Annica Kronsell's insights (2006), I look at whether the national legislature of Poland displays what she calls traits of 'hegemonic masculinity'. Masculinity is a concept that encompasses how we think a 'real' man should be, look, think and behave (Reeser 2010). As there are many cultural and social norms on how an ideal man should be and behave, there is not one single type of masculinity but rather a multitude of masculinities. According to Connell (1995), patriarchal norms on masculinity can also be called hegemonic. I refer to the idea that men should not only dominate women, some men should also dominate other men. Hegemonic forms of masculinity as they are understood today developed from the advent of industrial capitalism and imperialism (Connell and Wood 2005). Even though they are time- and space-specific, hegemonic masculinities share important characteristics: association

with authority, social conservatism, compulsory heterosexuality, integration with a family division of labour, strongly marked, symbolic gender differences, and an emotional distance between men and women. The subsequent section discusses the connections between the gendered characteristics of femininity and masculinity and the nation.

Nationalism and gender

Agnieszka Mroziak's opening quote of this chapter suggested a connection along the lines of gender-state-nation-change. The following discussion explores this relationship from a theoretical perspective. While 'nationalism is a particular – and particularly potent – manifestation of political identification' (Peterson 2010: 35), scholars have argued that gender relations are always at the heart of cultural and historical constructions of national identities (McClintock 1995; Verdery 1996; Walby 1996a,b; Graff 2001, 2008b; Yuval-Davis 2001). They become even more important in times when the perceived national identities or values are at risk, or are under pressure because of particular social and political circumstances (like war, the persistence of an oppressive regime or the collapse of a former political and/or economic order). Significantly for the current study, 'nationalism is quintessentially [a] homogenizing, differentiating, or classifying discourse' (Verdery 1996: 227). According to feminist scholars, there are close ties between discourses about gender and those that define national, racial and ethnic identity (Graff 2008b). Therefore (as I explore empirically later in chapter 6) nations are constructs that are gendered in different ways (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989; Yuval-Davis 2001; Walby 2005; Graff 2008a).

At the same time these notions are not fixed: '[g]ender is a dynamic system, not a fixed dichotomy; the categories themselves are not simple or stable (contrary to common sense); and many gender issues concern patterns of interaction and relationship, having little to do with differences in personal characteristics' (Connell 2006: 838). This means that there are different ideals as to the rightful place and position of both women and men in society, which are engraved in the various economic, social, political and legal practices of the nation (Walby 1996b, 2005: 10). The ideas may entail a gendered

division of labour, cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity and a gendered approach to the articulation of women's and men's interests (Connell 2006). Moreover, organized religions are often very important carriers of such gendered projects (Walby 2005). Although analytically the discourses of religion and culture may appear as distinct from that of political relations, concretely and historically they are always entangled. This is especially true in countries of Eastern Europe, such as Poland, where the church is a key actor in national identity debates.

The dissertation follows Tamar Mayer's assertion (2000: 5-6) that the nation is intertwined with the male and female ego and is inseparable from gender and sexuality. A number of attempts to conceptualize the link between women and the state have focused on the central dimension of citizenship and how, far from being gender-neutral, it constructs women and men differently (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989:6). Both 'gender' and 'nation' are cultural constructs used both in academia and in daily life. Both are 'made up' and socially constructed through their use in social life – they become real and seemingly natural (Verdery 1996: 62). Both provide ways to socially classify and imply homogeneity and difference simultaneously. 'Nation has no meaning except in a world of "other"' (Verdery 1996: 62). Hence, to research the nexus of nation and gender is to question how either of them involves the other in the way they are socially elaborated or lived. As Katherine Verdery (1996:62-63) explains:

(g)ender as a construct mediates the relation between bodies, as anatomical or biological givens, and social meanings about them. Is it a symbol system by which bodies enter into sociality (...) To the extent that the modern nation-state is defined in relation to a geographical territory, "nation" parallels "gender" in linking the "physical" body of the state to a set of meanings and affects, thus rendering physical space socio-political.

Similarly, Tamar Mayer (2000) argued that because nationalism, gender, and sexuality are socially and culturally constructed, they often play an important role in constructing each other in turn. In particular, they do this by using the 'we' category and juxtaposing it to 'they', which makes easier their construction through the exclusion of that which is different. Thus, gendered and national categories produce lines of exclusion and categories of hierarchy.

Gender is also central to ‘eroticizing the nation’ (Verdery 1996: 77) – for instance, through stereotypical constructions in which the male heroes burn with love and devotion for the feminized motherland. The ways in which women’s bodies relate to the national collectivity has been elaborated in the seminal work *Woman-Nation-State* by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (1989). They distinguish five major ways in which women are involved in ethnic and national processes:

1. women as biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities;
2. women as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic and national groups;
3. women as central participants in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as the transmitters of its culture;
4. women as signifiers of ethnic/national differences – as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and the transformation of ethnic/national categories;
5. women as participants in national, economic, political, and military struggles.

Additionally, Sylvia Walby (1996b: 237-238) has argued that there are two more ways that we need in order to look into gender relations in collectivities:

1. the specificity of gender divisions of labour in different ethnic/national groups;
2. the conflict between different forms of social hierarchy.

Walby (1996b: 238) concedes that different genders (and classes) may be differentially enthusiastic about ‘the’ ostensible ethnic/national project depending on the degree to which it (and its priorities) is ‘theirs’.

However, these classical elaborations can lead to ambiguities. As Julie Mostov (2000: 98) pointed out, the status of women in nationalist discourse is unequivocal. On the one hand, as women guarantee the continuity of a nation, they hold the highest value – they are ‘mothers of a nation (...) that need to be protected’ (Mostov 2000: 99). On the other hand, as Mostov claims, they are always suspect, as they might be disloyal by denying to perform the prescribed role of caring about the extension of the nation: they might not want children or may have them with ‘inappropriate’ partners. For this reason, the need to protect women unavoidably starts requiring the monitoring of

women's behaviour (Mostov 2000: 91). This monitoring is most effectively performed through reproductive policy that regulates access to birth control methods as well as the public support for motherhood (or lack thereof).

Importantly for my study, the subjectivity notions of 'female' and 'male' can be elaborated in such a way that they intersect unequally with citizenship, implying that practically women and men are not equal in their rights as citizens. I intend to examine this by looking at how discourses construct subjects in parliament. Attention is due to how nationalist politics integrates gender and what forms of national imagery are offered, by whom, and how political discourses, around for example abortion, produce distinctive values and subjects (this is discussed in chapters 5 and 6).

Postcolonial studies and (post-)dependency theory

A significant body of work from which the thesis draws is postcolonial studies. Rasa Navickaite (2016: 121) has argued that the application of postcolonial theory to the post-state socialist context is not unproblematic. 'Postcolonial' cannot be used simply as a parallel term with 'post state-socialist' (Koobak and Marling 2014). Eastern Europe in the second half of the 20th century specifically was not a case of direct imperial conquest in the same way as other geographic regions had been. Nonetheless, the East is always 'only precariously included in the idea of Europe' (Navickaite 2016: 121). As I discuss below, Eastern Europeans' claims of belonging to Europe, on the one hand, and their calls for catching up to Europe, on the other, rearticulate and reproduce ideas of Western superiority (Kulpa and Mizielinska 2011; Koobak and Marling 2014).

Although scholars from the postcolonial tradition were initially reluctant to accept potential similarities between postcolonial and post-state socialist experiences, there is increasingly a recognition that postcolonial theory may provide fruitful insights into post-state socialist transformation processes (Imre 2014; Trakilovic 2016; Koobak and Marling 2014). As argued by Karolina Krasuska (2013), there has been a growth in research discussing the problems of Eastern Europe from the postcolonial perspective since the 1990s. In the Polish academic context, the frames testing the postcolonial

approach and its usefulness were discussed in the special issue of *Teksty Drugie* (2010) and in the edited volume by Gosk and Karwowska (2008). The main debate centered on the applicability of the term postcolonial in the post-state socialist context, with some authors suggesting to use the concept of post-dependency instead (Gosk 2008).

Jan Sowa (2011) has outlined that post-state socialist Eastern Europe shares several common features with postcolonial terrains of the former Third World. He sees this in the degradation of social capital; low levels of social and civic trust in public institutions and in politics at large; the weakness of the civic tradition (activism, civil society participation); weak identification with state institutions and their representatives; the public sphere often being overwhelmed with primordial conflicts and forces; lack of control over religious institutions; and the spilling over of symbols, rituals and religious values from the sacrum to the secular sphere (Sowa 2011: 443).

Arguably, a combination of postcolonial theory with insights from post-state socialism provides the basis for a critical approach to the East-West divide and for exposing and challenging the binary logic that keeps Europe's ideological divide in place (Trakilovic 2016).

What makes critical dialogue with postcolonialism especially relevant for CEE is its complex and continuing process of self-colonisation: in rejecting the former coloniser (Soviet Union, Russia), the region has constituted itself as a periphery of the West (Koobak and Marling 2014: 336).

This means interrogating processes like Europeanization from the perspective of the Eastern periphery and asking questions about the hierarchical positioning, which assumes 'Eastern European backwardness' going through a linear progressive trajectory towards the desirable 'Western' goal point that was arguably the essence of transformation in Eastern Europe (cf. Kulpa and Mizielińska 2011; Navickaite 2016; Colpani and Ponzanesi 2016; Koobak and Marling 2014).

Cross-connecting postcolonial theory and post-state socialism, hence, gives us a framework to deconstruct, question, and reposition our understanding of relationships such as the one between discourse and social power. It gives new concepts and insights to the analysis of how power hierarchies are enacted, reproduced, or legitimised by the text and talk of dominant groups or institutions within the given context. Within the

framework of such an account of discursively mediated dominance and inequality, drawing parallels between the postcolonial and post-state socialist conditions is important. Below, I discuss concepts drawn from postcolonial theory that inform my dissertation.

In chapter 4, I explicitly bring a gender lens to the post-state socialist discourses and highlight commonalities with postcolonial equivalents. Already Franz Fanon (2008: 82-108), one of the seminal first theorists of post-colonialism, observed that decolonization means the 'reclaiming of manhood'. The 'communist man' (much like the colonial man) has been constructed as effeminate in the post-state socialist discourse, especially by the conservative proponents of the 'return to tradition' discourse (for more details see the discussion of post-transformation gender relations in chapter 4). The way to emancipation and empowerment for the 'true manly man' is seen in the negation of the state socialist condition (cf. Verdery 1996; Graff 2008b). This logic has served to legitimize the secondary position of women in national collectivities. The parallel between post-state socialism and post-colonialism is evident here. As Nira Yuval-Davis pointed out (2001:128) the construction of womanhood of Third World women has a property of otherness to it, because women are excluded from the national 'we' of the body politic. This puts them in an object rather than subject position. This can be seen also in the East European states that were 'purified' by pushing women out of the public and workplace in transformation (Kulawik 2005).

Feminist political economy

This dissertation also draws on insights from feminist political economy, since economic transformation in Poland is one of the most important social and historical contexts of my research. Feminist political economists have argued that it is essential to understand economies as gendered structures and economic crises as crises in social reproduction (Rai and Waylen 2013: 6-7). Feminist political and legal theorists have shown how women's subordination in the family/private sphere shapes labour markets in ways that disadvantage and discriminate against women in education and employment, and reinforce their subordination in the public, political sphere (True

2010: 41). During economic crises, women workers are particularly vulnerable to being laid off work or having their wages reduced. The usually concomitant reduction of public services affects women adversely, as primary care workers in the domestic sphere, while the price shocks to food production and markets make women vulnerable to debt as they struggle to provide for their families (Elson 2013: 207). Hence, feminist political economy highlights the masculine nature of the integrated political-economic authority structure (True 2010: 44).

This is an important insight in the post-transformation and market liberalization context of Poland, but also following the 2008 economic crisis, which is the time period under analysis in this work. As Rai and Waylen (2013: 1) point out: the impact of the crisis is never uniformly felt. There are those who suffer more from the slump than others. Indeed, economic crises create opportunities for restructuring and diminishing social protection in the name of fiscal responsibility (cf. Klein 2007). The most vulnerable in society are being hit hardest. The case of post-1989 Poland exemplifies how women were laid off and had their wages reduced at a time of economic crisis and 'shock therapy'. As I discuss in more detail in chapter 4, women's privation and exclusion as a result of transformation was evident in the form of their disproportionate unemployment in formal terms and their overrepresentation in part-time, ad hoc, and poorly paid work (Bridger et al. 1996; Pine 2002), their responsibility for care work that was previously catered to by the state (Haney 1999), the feminization of fields of work that were not valued materially or symbolically (Bridger et al. 1996; Pine 1996, 1998, 2002).

In general, political economy analyses political and economic power as part of the same authority structure. All forms of power are understood as having a material basis, and often as founded on material relations of inequality (True 2010: 44). This understanding directs us to investigate the interconnections between the economic, social and political realms. Such an investigation reveals that power operates not only through direct coercion but also through the structured relations of production and reproduction that govern the distribution and use of resources, benefits, privileges and authority within the home and transnational society at large (True 2010: 44). This, in the context of this dissertation, means that the political economic processes interact

with and re-configure the institutional and ideological formations of society where gendered subjects and relations are shaped.

Feminist institutionalism

While not applying the approach itself strictly, this dissertation also draws on the insights of feminist institutionalism. As understood by Mackay et al. (2009, 2010), new feminist institutionalism is a combination of feminist political science and ‘new’ institutionalism. Until recently gender was not very prominent in the analysis of institutions (Mackay et al. 2010). However, it can provide an insightful look at how gender relations are ‘institutionalized’, or ‘embedded in particular political institutions and constraining and shaping social interaction’ (Mackay et al. 2010: 581). Recognizing the value of the approach, there has been an important ‘institutional turn’ in feminist political science (Kenny 2009; Lovenduski 2011; Krook and Mackay 2011), allowing for the analysis of ‘underlying structures which underpin institutionalized advantages and disadvantages according to gender’ (Krook and Mackay 2011: 3).

Because feminist institutionalism is not a unified approach to studying gender and politics, it allows for the theorization of various phenomena within the institutions. It allows for a broad conceptualization of the interconnecting features of the political and the social, such as the interplay between political actors and institutions. It also highlights the interconnectedness of formal and informal rules, norms, and daily practices and the consequences of such dynamics (Mackay et al. 2009: 254). In my case, these ‘rules of the game’ and institutions are defined and co-constituted by the discourse within parliament and its actors. The institutional relevance of my work derives from its focus on discourses in parliament and the institutional agency of their construction. The study of how gender relations play out at different institutional levels (through the construction of images, symbols, and ideologies) allows for an understanding of how gendered patterns of hierarchy and exclusion are justified and legitimized in the ‘seemingly trivial’ level of interpersonal day-to-day interaction and the ‘doing’ or ‘performing’ of gender (Acker 1992, quoted in Mackay et al. 2009: 257).

Significantly, feminist institutionalism allows for the combination of several approaches to the study of the topic. Drawing from the historical strand, it is possible to conduct research on the long-term ramifications of ‘largely contingent events’ (Krook and Mackay 2011: 9). The implications of this include the study of paths and legacies in Eastern Europe from state socialist times, but also the contextualized impact of the ‘democratic’ transitions. Furthermore, the discursive approach to institutionalism analyses how ‘ideas and discourses construct and shape the very “exercise of power”, including (subjective) perceptions of positions’ (Schmidt 2010: 321). While I do not focus on the institutionalist workings or characteristics of the parliament, the study of gendered construction of subjects therein is informed by the notion of how discourses shape and are shaped by the ‘exercise of power’ within the institution.

Connecting it all to Poland

The following sections aim to bring the Polish context to fill the theoretical approaches discussed above. Arguably, Poland is a case of one-dimensional constructions of female and male identities with reference to the nation. While Gerber (2011: 491) admits that gender is but one element in a larger construction of Polish national identity, according to Małgorzata Radkiewicz (2005:116), the interrelation between gender and nation is so strong that it can be considered the most important aspect defining Polish national identity. While Poland is by no means unique in having gender and national identities strongly intertwined, the most significant feature of Polish nationalism is that it has always been related to specific historical connotations, which are masculinist in nature or reflect male-dominated hierarchies of values: the ethos of fighting (and losing – martyrdom), patriotism, and the catholic religion (Radkiewicz 2005: 116). Thus, Polish nationalism is tightly bound up with not only ethnic identification, but also the religious identification of the majority ethnic group (Gerber 2011: 491).

Because of massive population relocations, ethnic cleansing, and the significant redrawing of state borders, the ethnic homogenization of post-Second World War Poland paved the way for a particular discourse of Polish national identity centred on

Polish catholicism, rather than civic nationalism (Porter 2000; Snyder 2004; Zubrzycki 2010), forming a particular religious ethno-nationalism. As the great Polish cultural theorist, Maria Janion (1996, 2000, 2006), has extensively shown, the role of the romantic mythology as a source for modern discourse on gender and nation in Poland significantly overpowers all other sources. Romanticism, as a literary and cultural period, is essential and foundational to the construction of Polish national identity (Porter 2000). Specifically, the romantic mythology of ‘Mother Poland’ (*Matka-Polka*) as the defender of both the Polish-catholic soul and the core of the nation itself has resulted in a strong association between women’s social and cultural roles and Poland’s very survival as a place and a people (Porter 2000; Graff 2008a). Professor Anna Titkow pictured this trope as:

Clothed in black, Mother Poland [*Matka-Polka*] (...) cultivated Polish identity and traditions at home, maintained the religion, language and customs. Years spent without men taught mothers ironclad self-reliance – they had to teach themselves to run the family after their husbands were killed or exiled. Mother Poland’s heroism pressures women to be perfect. Their reward is high prestige in society and family, but being placed on such a pedestal narrows the spectrum of socially acceptable behaviours (...) The Polish Mother has had to be good, faithful, strong and devoted; it would not do for her to submit to desires, or pursue her own passions or dreams. (Podgórska and Kapecka 2003)

This spectre of Mother Poland, a fundamentally gendered ideal-type, has left little cognitive space for the development or valuation of a gender-neutral citizen in Poland (Fuszara 1993; Gerber 2011; Graff 2005; Heinen 1997; Watson 1993b). Maria Janion (1996, 2004, 2006) has extensively shown that the ideal-type of Polishness (combination of *Polonia* and *Matka-Polka*) is steeped in romanticist mythology and leads to Polish nationalism being martyrologic, or even necrophile, due to an almost eroticized vision of suffering, sacrifice and death. The ever-present trope of Mother Poland is both cause and effect of ultraconservative and religious entrenchment. In a country with a very strong Marian worship strand of catholicism, *Matka-Polka* combines the figure of *Mater Dolorosa* that says goodbye to sons that are going to their death, with the position of a patron-saint of nationalist and independentist lost-cause conspiracies (Mroziak 2012). The figure of *Matka-Polka* highlights the ongoing need for cultural explanations of policy outcomes, particularly those that address how categories of worth work to distinguish between the ‘deserving’ and the ‘undeserving’,

and how collective schemas comprise the normative foundation from which policy options are developed (Gerber 2011: 492).

With real women pacified by the gendered nationalist discourse, feminist political economy approaches and postcolonial and dependency theory point to even more axes of inequality and marginalization in the Polish case. Monika Bobako (2011) has shown Polish transformation processes can be viewed as examples of racializing the class difference, namely the treatment of social classes as racialized (lesser) others. Following the insights of Etienne Balibar's and Immanuel Wallerstein's (1991) *Race, Nation, Class*, Bobako argues that the racializing of class difference functions as a feature of market liberalization and transformation discourses. In her discussion, she shows that the process of creation of class difference in Poland after 1989 can be interpreted as the racialization of social groups that were victims of the capitalist transformation (Bobako 2011:1). She claims that the categories of race, class racism, and racializing are a useful tool in analysing the creation of post-transformation class differences in Poland (Bobako 2011: 10,14). Psychological traits of laziness, unwillingness to reform, and inefficiency, intimately connected to the stereotypical racist 'inferior race' understandings, have been applied to categorize and stigmatize former public sector workers in Poland – the *homo sovieticus* from the opening quote.

The discursive strategies of essentializing, reifying, and naturalizing of cultural characteristics as biological traits were employed consciously to legitimize exploitation and inequalities in concrete power relations and economic interests. Drawing interdiscursively on rhetorical devices of racial superiority, Polish political and economic elites legitimized inequalities and explained the economic disenfranchisement of the former working class, the unemployed, and those who needed welfare as the inescapable result of the neoliberal-oriented economic transformation. This process allows for a deeper understanding of mechanisms of social exclusion and segregation based on hierarchies of subjects.

Within the Polish context, it is also useful to consider the notion of 'colonial complicity', namely the situation in which a country was neither a dominant colonial power, nor an 'innocent victim', nor a mere outsider of the colonial projects (Vuorela 2009: 19). From this perspective, Polish politics is influenced by its paradoxical

historical legacy, which mainstream memory and national discourse has attempted to whitewash. While it was a periphery to colonial empires, Poland also proceeded with its own colonizing projects in Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine in particular. For reasons of convenience, Polish adepts of postcolonial studies completely neglect this fact, using post-colonialism exclusively to pursue ‘typically Polish martyrology’ and to ‘remind ourselves and the world that Poland was a victim’ (Sowa 2015: 62; cf. Ruchniewicz 2007; Orla-Bukowska 2006). In Poland, the power of seduction of the hegemonic discourse about national colonial victimhood is so strong that there is an explicit need to examine what it purposefully overshadows, namely the complicity in the practices of imperial domination (cf. Sowa 2011).

Along similar lines, the Bulgarian historian, Alexander Kiossev (1999), propounds the view that Eastern European countries are a case of ‘self-colonizing’ cultures that import foreign (Western European) cultural, economic, and political, modes of development, considering them superior, which is typical for peripheries and semi-peripheries. He argues that there is no explicit forced colonization of these countries, except that purported by their own elites – ‘comprador elites’, as Pietrzak (2016) calls them that are beholden not to their own citizens, but to larger, transnational and international economic and financial structures. The crux of the problem with self-colonization is the identification of ‘normal’ with foreign or outside cultural models and their implementation (Kiossev 1999; Sowa 2011). So, self-colonizing cultures of Eastern Europe constituted their cultural and political identity in an inferiority position vis-à-vis the West, especially with the economic transformations after 1989 (Sowa 2011: 25).

At the same time, the Polish political elites constructed and emphasized their apparent belonging to the West by widespread arguments that Eastern Europe had been ‘kidnapped’ from the West by the Soviet Union following the Second World War (Kundera 1984). Transformation then represented post-state socialism as a one-way road from the ‘communist’ economic system of backwardness to liberal democracy of the West (Navickaite 2016). Moreover, Polish elites relativized the distance from the West by *orientalizing* and *othering* their Eastern neighbours and thus constructing Poland as the last Western rampart in the East (Zarycki 2004; cf. Said 1978). This

attitude echoes the notions of colonial complicity discussed above because it served to justify Polish claims of a civilizational mission towards its Eastern neighbours, which informed the Polish imperial ambitions during the First and Second Polish Republics (cf. Porter 2000: 158-177). This is an important observation that premises the discussions of the legacies of Polish transformation politics in chapter 4.

Gendered and critical view of Europeanization

In the years of regime transformation and especially the period following the accession to the EU, Europeanization was an important part of the political process and a reference point for the political elites in Poland and the wider region. In a very narrow and popular understanding, it meant the processes of legal adaptation and legislative implementation leading up to EU accession. Eastern European states that were to accede to the EU were obligated to harmonize their domestic legal framework with the *acquis communautaire* of the European community. This harmonization included their acceptance of policy solutions that were already ‘defined and consolidated in the EU policy process’ (Radaelli 2003: 30). However, the process of Europeanization was not limited to accepting EU laws and mechanisms. As with many instruments and processes in EU integration, Europeanization does not really have a set definition, but Radaelli’s (2003: 3) extensive description provides a good clarification of key processes as:

a) construction b) diffusion and c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’ and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies.

Magdalena Dabrowska (2009) has argued that Europeanization should go deeper and lead to the reform of values and lifestyles. In contrast, Mikulova (2014: 166) has shown that the task of pinning down the ‘why’, ‘who’, ‘what’, and ‘how’ of Europeanization in the many spheres of politics is next to futile. She claims that the disputed concept of Europeanization itself poses the first hurdle. Due to its inherent complexity, it tends to involve a myriad of agents, instruments and mechanisms. It can be operationalised as both process and outcome and this is ambiguous. Most available definitions opt for theoretical and empirical utility (Mikulova 2014:166). For instance, the QUING

research project considered Europe to be ‘a way of life’, drawing on Tony Judt’s (2006) thoughts.²⁰

In terms of research on gender equality and Europeanization, it appears that gender analyses of the domestic impact of ‘Europe’ have not abounded so far, especially for countries of Eastern Europe. Emanuela Lombardo and Maxime Forest (2012) call for a study of Europeanization recognizing that discourse is a particularly relevant factor in understanding the type of impact the EU has on domestic politics. The envisaged approach should be useful for researchers to focus on the gendered implications of Europeanization (Lombardo and Forest 2012:13).

Scholars have argued that ‘the pursuit of equality has become an important priority for EU member states’ (Krizsan et al. 2014: 54). On paper, political commitment to gender equality has a longstanding tradition in Europe. The Rome Treaty, signed in 1957, paid due attention to gender equality in employment and included a statement that women and men should receive equal pay for the same work. This notion was further elaborated on in numerous EU directives regulating the rights of women and men in the labour market (Walby 2004).

In the 1970s, several EU directives referred to issues of employment and direct discrimination of women. They again called for equal pay, equal access to training, promotions and equal work conditions. Further directives in the 1980s and 1990s included guarantors of rights for self-employed people and those employed part-time (Dabrowska 2009). EU directives not only supposed to address labour market from the perspective of gender equality, but also to center on problems with the reconciliation of work and family life. Both the public sphere and family life were supposed to be investigated through gender equality lenses. The Amsterdam Treaty (1999) emphasized that one of the aims of the EU was to counteract discrimination and to

²⁰The Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies Integrated Project (2006-2011), under the direction of Mieke Verloo, tackled examples of exclusion and polarisation, along gender, ethnicity, religion or sexuality lines, at the level of member states. The aim was to provide the knowledge for inclusive gender+ equality policies. For more information see: http://www.quing.eu/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,

promote gender equality (Krizsan et al. 2014). EU countries were obliged to respect gender equality in all legal acts and actions.

Following this logic, gender equality is one of the marks of Europeanization. For Poland, the acceptance of legal provisions on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the labour market did not involve much discussion in the pre-accession period (see Table 4.4 for a periodization of Polish politics). Dabrowska (2009) claims that the legal changes were probably treated as a kind of ‘tax’, a form of ‘toll’ at the city gates that the country was obliged to pay to accede to the EU and receive funds. Within this understanding, gender equality was seen as a part of the European ‘package’ – a ‘forced fit’ as one analyst has called it (Weiner 2009: 307).

Post-socialist states’ fierce yearning to return to Europe and the fortitude of a globally consolidated gender equality regime overrode an active dialogue among feminist scholars and activists, from both East and West, about the distinctiveness of gender identities, roles, and relations in Eastern Europe (Weiner 2009: 306).

However, in practice, the recognition and implementation of standards of gender equality included in recommendations caused much more trouble. While the EU *acquis* was duly translated, adopted, transposed into domestic law and seemingly implemented, the ‘soft’ values that were expected to diffuse in society did not. Values surrounding gender equality, equal chances, and anti-discrimination were not incorporated and did not infuse Polish politics. This is clear in the discursive examples presented in the previous chapter. According to Grabowska (2014), the changes that occurred in Polish politics in the area of equal treatment have been slow and unsatisfactory. Similarly, research on equality within the European context has recognized a good transposition record in the new Eastern European EU members that was managed prior to the accession, combined with persistent problems of application and enforcement (Krizsan 2009; Krizsan and Papp 2005; Sissenich 2007; Falkner et al. 2008).

Therefore, in Poland, Europeanization included a revision of laws including those concerning gender equality. Gender-based discrimination had to be specifically outlawed and there needed to be a new position at the ministerial level responsible for equality. This was part of the Europeanization process, understood as the adaptation

of the national legal system to EU norms and institutional obligations (Avdeyeva 2015). The most important of the legislative changes effected by the EU appeared in the Polish Labour Code between 2002 and 2010 (Grabowska 2014). The Labour Code was amended several times to adapt it to the requirements of EU equality-related directives. The amendments introduced and clarified the definitions of discrimination (direct and indirect), and the definition of sexual harassment.

The second important piece of anti-discrimination law was introduced after 2004 during the process of adjusting Polish law to the EU (Grabowska 2014). The Act on the implementation of some regulations of the European Union regarding equal treatment entered into force on 1 January 2011. The new law specified the practices for counteracting discrimination on account of gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, denomination, worldview, disability, age and sexual orientation. It also became the basis for the work of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment (discussed in detail in chapter 4).

Numerous authors are critical towards the mechanisms and implementation of gender equality policy in the EU (Walby 2005; Ludwig and Wöhl 2013). Arguably, within the EU framework, gender equality is too often narrowed down to equality in the access to labour market, which ignores other aspects of inequality and does not provide tools for debating the origins of discrimination, such as sexism and patriarchy (Grabowska 2014). According to Ulrich Sedelmeier and Frank Schimmelfennig (2005), Europeanization was a process of discursive appropriation of norms, values and rules of behaviour in EU member states. So, the process of accession was a process of apparent Europeanization. The discourses on gender equality and gender mainstreaming were presented as distinctly European solutions to regime change (Krizsan and Popa 2010). As observers later noted however:

after the EU's Eastern enlargement of 2004, it became clear that some of the reforms in the former candidate countries resembled a Potemkin village: behind the gleaming façade presented to outsiders—notably visitors from Brussels—often lingered a grimmer reality (Mikulova 2014: 163).

The hijacking of the ‘post-s’: post-state socialism and post-colonialism

As I stated in the initial chapter of this dissertation, political science literature on gender and post-state socialism has struggled to explain the lack of gender equality and the resurgence of nationalism in the countries that underwent transformations. Significantly, Peggy Watson pointed out that this stemmed from an unconscious normative assumption that a feminist consciousness (in the form of more gender-equal relations) should have appeared and that it was prevented from doing so by some shared experience in state socialism (Watson 2000b: 106). This stance was seen by many in Eastern Europe as a paternalistic Western and ‘white’ understanding of transformation. As I discussed in the beginning of this chapter, ‘West’ became an unspoken point of reference for the representation of Eastern Europe, a Western-centeredness analogous to whiteness-centred interpretations of change in the postcolonial world (Watson 2000b: 102; Grabowska 2014). The ‘import of Western feminism’ has therefore been criticized by disparate groups of academics, activists, feminists and also anti-feminists (see for example Funk 1993; Toth 1993; Gal 1996; Nicolaescu 1996; Siklova 1998; Regulska 1998)

Therefore, the expectation of achieving ‘Europeanization’ and improved gender equality can be seen as part of othering processes that are supported by the economic and political domination, and the discursive power of Western countries (Regulska 1998; Slavova 2006). Within this context, it is possible to rethink the relationship between centres and margins to include a diversified and shifting position of Eastern Europe in this order. On the one hand, many of the countries in this region are constructed as *other*, while on the other they form part of the European Union. Poland shows this complex position – it ‘lags behind’ Western Europe in terms of its progress on gender equality, while it takes part in the economic and political power that the EU commands, especially towards non-Europeans (which can be seen in the national identity debates discussed in chapter 6 of this dissertation).

However, Polish feminists such as Ewa Charkiewicz (2006) have criticized the positive vision of the EU as the guarantor of gender equality, mostly due to two

interconnected mechanisms that make it difficult or even impossible to implement equality: the principle of subsidiarity, which in practice allows the member states to interpret and select the *acquis* according to local gender regimes, and the ideological as well as institutional domination of market neoliberalism (cf. Young 2000; Rognlien 2011). However, a postcolonial or de-colonial critique is not the same as ‘hijacked postcolonialism’.

In fact, what has happened is that some features of especially postcolonial language have been hijacked by nationalist and ultraconservative forces in Poland. These groups exactly aim to portray transformation and Europeanization as evil oppressors that allegedly do not allow Poland to grow past its peripheral role into, what they think it should be, a regional power. This highlights the specificity of Polish postcolonial attitudes. Postcolonial studies are widely considered a critical discipline, or even an emancipatory one, and some, as Jan Sowa (2015), have argued that post-colonialism is the effect of Marxism meeting postmodernism. However, in Poland Marx is conspicuously absent even in postcolonial studies, instead allowing for the triumph of the postmodern (Sowa 2015: 46).

Polish sociologists and cultural theorists like Ewa Charkiewicz (2006), Jarosław Pietrzak (2016), and Sowa (2011, 2015) often use the terminology of world systems and dependency theory, seeing Poland as a (semi)peripheral country in a global capitalist economic system. Its (semi)peripheral position puts it necessarily in a chain of economic dependencies that results in the country only being a resource of cheap labour and raw materials or of component parts for the transnational capital accumulation. Within such a relationship, they see the postmodernist aspects, as mediated by far-right conservatives and nationalists, fighting modernizing and progressive Enlightenment traditions through the opposition to ideas of equality, emancipation, rationality, and secularism. Sowa asks whether this is a misapplication of postcolonial studies or some inherent conservative fault within the theory (Sowa 2015: 46).

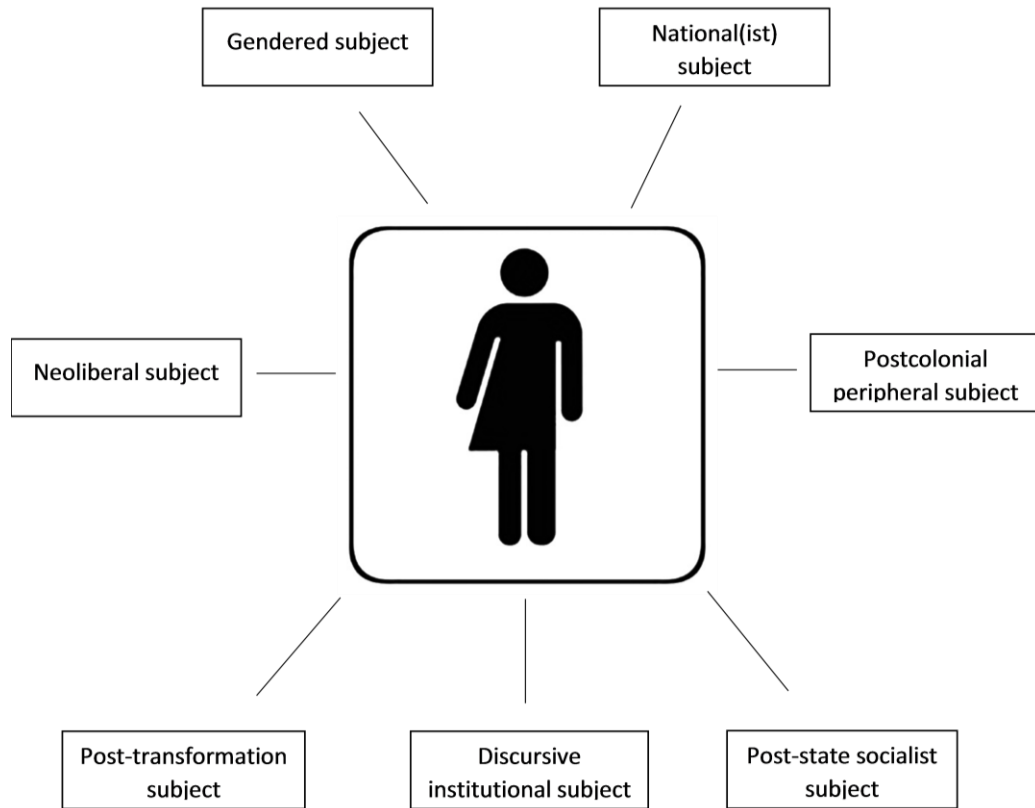
The ‘hijacking’ of post-colonialism in the Polish context can point to the latter. Postcolonial theory engrains the positive valorisation of locality and difference as

opposing the universalist and dominating tendencies of mainstream ‘Western’ culture. This gives the perfect excuse and intellectual tool to those who want to express their aversion to modernity as such. Postcolonial theory gives the elites of a peripheral country like Poland an intellectually valid way of expressing their *ressentiment* and inferiority complexes (cf. Sowa 2011). Polish conservatives and the catholic church reject the mainstream Western socio-cultural tradition, discursively deploying labels like ‘liberal’ or ‘leftist’ (*lewacki*), while being convinced that they have an alternative: ‘our’ different moral national model, thus blowing up difference into superiority and inferiority complexes (Drozda 2015). This is now producing a backlash in terms of values in Eastern Europe, where ultraconservative elites claim to be the true defenders of ‘European-ness’ against forces allegedly corrupting it (same-sex marriage, homosexuality, gender equality, sexual education, etc.).

Synthesizing the approaches

The conceptual approaches discussed in this chapter point to multiple possible levels and lines of exclusion and inequality that are relevant to the Polish context. The approaches have been selected for the purpose of providing theoretical insights on a common theme of constructing subjects and values that might be marginalized. The link that brings together all the discussed approaches is that they all point to and elucidate specific constructions of subjects – they all show how certain political discursive ‘losers’ are constructed. These ‘losers’ in the conceptual understanding of subject construction are not unlike from the term subaltern used first by Gramsci (1971) and then by Spivak (1999), namely they point to notions of subordination and underclass. Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 summarize the constructions of subjects based on the conceptual insights used in this dissertation.

Figure 2.1 Aspects of the construction of subjects based on the theoretical insights used in this dissertation.



(Source: own compilation)

Figure 2.1 shows that the discursively constructed subjects can be affected by intersectional mechanisms of exclusion and marginalization. Similarly, Table 2.1 summarizes the specific categories of subjects in ‘losing’ power relations that each of the approaches elaborates on. This elucidates potential avenues of discourse interpretation in the following chapters.

Table 2.1 The different political ‘losers’ as conceptualized by the approaches applied in this dissertation.

Conceptual approach	Its ‘losers’
Gender and nationalism literature	Women (including those of <i>other</i> ethnicity) and non-heteronormative individuals
Feminist political economy	Women (performing unpaid care work; laid off due to market ‘efficiency’ and austerity reasons)
Feminist institutionalism	Gender equality norms and their proponents
Postcolonial and dependency theories	Non-Western ‘others’ (peripheral countries; racialized <i>others</i>)

(Source: own compilation)

Feminist analyses outline how categories of women are *othered* and put in lower positions in national construction projects, especially when they are run by right-wing and conservative forces. At the same time, postcolonial and dependency theory as applied to the post-state socialist context shows how particular groups of workers and employees get ‘racialized’ and marginalized basing on neoliberal market principles. Feminist political economy gives insights into how the private-public division and mostly women’s care work puts them in a losing position within globalized economic forces. Furthermore, feminist institutionalism explores how the ‘ways of doing’ things in parliament and norms and rules are not gender-neutral and also more often than not favour masculine values and behaviours.

Conclusions

This chapter has argued that a combination of approaches is necessary to examine the underlying unequal presumptions of the Polish political discourses. Since the aim of

the dissertation is to determine the discursive construction of subjects and values, a single body of literature would largely ignore the importance of the multifocal construction of Polish discourse. Building on the insights of gendered nationalism, feminist political economy, feminist institutionalism, and postcolonial and dependency theories, the chapter developed an interpretive model to help inform the ensuing empirical analysis. I argued that the conceptual toolkit drawn from the outlined scholarly literatures provides a framework to show that the ‘losers’ of Polish political discourses can be marginalized or vilified on many theoretical levels. Before moving on to the specific discursive analysis of the anti-equality and exclusionary constructions of subjects in Polish parliamentary debates, I outline the steps taken to perform the analysis in the next chapters.

Chapter 3: The critical discourse analysis approach, method, and research design

‘The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.’
Ludwig Wittgenstein²¹

After exploring the key literature and theoretical approaches, the thesis outlines a method that allows the exploring the daily work of the hegemonic discourses discussed above. This chapter outlines the method and research design that are used to investigate the research questions and apply the theoretical approaches presented in the previous sections. The main issues addressed are: what is critical discourse analysis and how can it be applied to the study of gendered discourses in the Polish parliament? How was the case study selected and what are its implications for the research design? What are the main methodological issues in operationalizing CDA? The first section discusses and justifies the methodological perspective of the thesis. Next, I show how to apply the chosen theoretical framework and elaborate on the combination of studying gendered discourses. I also explain the need to use process tracing in order to complement the CDA method and provide context and background information. The third section introduces the research methods and sources used in the project. I provide an overview of the assumptions and implications of critical discourse analysis following Norman Fairclough (1992, 1995), including potential limitations as well as issues of reflexivity, replicability, and generalizability. The final section addresses the selected case, the sources, and the particular discussion of the Polish parliament as the main site of analysis.

A feminist methodology

This work adopts the perspective that ‘there is no distinctive feminist methodology, but there is a distinctive feminist approach to methodology and methods’ (Krook and Squires 2006: 45; Reinharz 1992; Squires 1999; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002; Randall 2002). In this sense, there is no one prescriptive way to conduct feminist

²¹ From the *‘Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus’* (1922) by Ludwig Wittgenstein.

research. As Randall (2002: 109) claims there is no ‘simple and single feminist perspective within political science’; rather, feminism can be more accurately considered as ‘a kind of developing dialogue around a common but evolving agenda’, a specific, though not restrictive or singular, approach to social science (Randall 2002: 109). This common agenda involves the commitment to problem-driven research which, as Krook and Squires believe (2006: 45), should even be applied at the expense of method-driven research. Furthermore, since there is no single feminist theory, or no one feminism, there is also no single ‘correct’ approach to methods other than the commitment to critical research and exposing power and exploitation structures and systems (Bryson 1992; Krook and Squires 2006; Tickner 2006).

Hence, feminist research is driven by substantive political problems and is open to the application of a wide range of methodological frames. In other words, a feminist methodology is an ‘epistemology in action’ (Weldon 2006b) – in the case of this study, an explicitly discursive and interpretative one. Typically, a feminist conviction implies a critical approach, aimed at creating social change or exposing social injustice and inequality. ‘An important commitment of feminist methodology is that knowledge must be built and analysed in a way that can be used by women to change whatever oppressive conditions they face’ (Tickner 2006: 25).

Similarly, the position of the researcher and the individual choices in terms of methods, while reflecting one’s ontological and epistemological commitments, have implications that are different in feminist research from those of traditional positivist social science. The approach moves beyond a determinist and traditionally positivist concept of causality, providing instead a reflexive perspective and a contextualized and dynamic way of interpreting meaning (Kulawik 2009: 263). Arguably, when combined, different forms of knowledge will produce, not a universal understanding, but a broader, albeit contingent understanding of the nexus of gender, institutions, power, and discourse in legislatures (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 155).

Unlike empirical methods designed to generate results that can be replicated by different scholars, feminist methodologies can yield different outcomes in the hands of different theorists. This highlights the collective self-reflective and deliberative nature of feminist methodologies (Ackerly et al. 2006: 7). Accordingly, Ann Tickner

(2006: 19, 27) argues for ‘seeing theory as constitutive of reality’ and claims that acknowledging the researcher’s subjective element (which arguably exists in all social science research) in fact increases the validity and value of the work. Therefore, this research project, while producing feminist knowledge out of research practice and experience, explicitly adheres to the belief that such knowledge is always constituted by the theorist, as the one who reflects on that experience (Kronsell 2006: 127) (see a discussion of reflexivity further in this chapter).

In order to find out how gender subjectivities and values are politicized following democratic transformation processes and why this institutionalizes the exclusion of women and minority groups in politics in Poland, this research project builds upon the discursive turn in feminist analysis and combines its insights with wider discussions of poststructuralist discourse theory (Bacchi 1999; 2005). In a similar attempt to bridge theory with discursive methods, within the new institutionalist school, scholars have already employed discourse analysis in order to put greater emphasis on the role of ideas and discourses in influencing actors’ interests, preferences and behaviours (Schmidt 2008; Freidenvall and Krook 2011: 43).

Analysing gender, power, and discourse

As one of the main guiding concepts of the research project, discourse requires elaboration, especially with regards to its analytical specificity within legislatures and political debates. In general, discourse is defined as a specific social construct, a language (both spoken and written) that has a mutually constitutive relationship with the social structures within which it operates. Echoing the opening quote of this chapter, discourse can be conceptualized as “‘speaking” which sets limits on what can be said’ (Bacchi 1999: 40). My work is therefore informed by the understanding that reality is mediated through discourse (van Dijk 2008). Discourses are socially constituted and they constitute the social (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 448).

In this research context, discourse is functional to the social construction of power through the discursive creation of both women and femininity (as a subordinate *other*) and men and masculinity (as the *self*). Therefore, language or discourse cannot be considered a ‘transparent tool’ and require a significant degree of interpretation as to what is constructed as the *other* within, or how it is constructed (Bacchi 1999; Hansen

2006). Importantly, discourses are time-and site-specific, they cannot be ‘read’ without their linguistic, social, historical, and political contexts. ‘Language is social and political, an inherently unstable system of signs that generate meaning through a simultaneous construction of identity and difference’ (Hansen 2006: 17).

Because the field of discourse analysis is heterogeneous and broad (cf. Phillips and Jorgensen 2002; Schmidt 2008; Kenny 2009) it is up to the researcher to create analytical limits between the discursive and the non-discursive elements for the purposes of their work (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 153-5). In this vein, Vivien Schmidt (2008) has been working from a discursive institutionalist perspective, reclaiming the concept of discourse for new institutionalism and demonstrating how it is an important tool for the study of relations between ideas and institutions. Her studies, however, have been criticized for their weakness and narrowness of the conceptualization of discourse (Bacchi 2005; Panizza and Miorelli 2013). Schmidt restricts her understanding of discourse to a communicative vessel for conveying substantive ideas, which is unsatisfactory in establishing the relationship between ideas, power (and hence power inequalities), and discourse (Panizza and Miorelli 2013: 305-7). Carol Bacchi (2005) goes further to claim that institutionalist analysis and discourse are inherently incompatible because of an epistemological nonalignment between the two approaches. Bacchi’s argument is strong from a Foucauldian vantage point; however, it does not necessarily hold for other types and understandings of discourse analysis.

Conversely, the poststructuralist approach in terms of critical discourse analysis emphasizes that there are both discursive and non-discursive elements of social reality (like institutions and norms guiding behaviour) (Panizza and Miorelli 2013). Importantly, these are mutually constitutive, which allows for a fuller understanding of the role of discourse in creating power (and inequality). From this point of view, the social orders observed in institutions (in this research) are never fully structured, but open to political interventions and dislocations that make it possible to ground or subvert them (Panizza and Miorelli 2013: 302). Critical discourse analysis does not ignore the existence of a reality outside ‘our heads’ or language. The argument is not that all societal phenomena are purely discursive or linguistic, but that for things to be

intelligible they must exist as part of a wider framework of meaning and discourse (cf. Fairclough 1992, 1995; Phillips and Jorgensen 2002; Panizza and Miorelli 2013). Therefore, discourse can be seen as a form of social practice that both constitutes the social world and is constituted by other social practices. '[T]he discursive constitution of society does not emanate from a free play of ideas in people's heads, but from social practice which is firmly rooted in and oriented in real, material and social structures' (Fairclough 1992: 66).

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is at the same time a method and a mode of social research. Discourse analysis in general is:

an attempt to identify regularities in the methods used by participants as they construct the discourse through which they establish the character of their activities and beliefs in the course of interaction (Gilbert and Mulkay 1984:14).

Furthermore, CDA is 'primarily interested and motivated by pressing social issues, which it hopes to better understand through discourse analysis' (van Dijk 1993: 280). More generally it focuses not only on social justice, inequality, power, and power struggles, but also on the exploration and exposing of the often subtle role of discourse in the production and perpetuation of injustice, inequality, and dominance (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 19).

Thus, CDA espouses a decidedly political and normative position. For this reason, it fits my explicitly gendered and feminist approach to the research topic. CDA aims to reveal the underlying relations of power that structure discourse, and how political actors consciously and unconsciously reproduce hegemonic discourses. I subsequently discuss the CDA approach developed by Norman Fairclough, which is arguably the most elaborated version of critical discourse analysis (Turunen 2015). Fairclough's goal was to synthesize CDA and socio-political analysis (Fairclough 2001, 2003). Therefore, this method serves best my own project.

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is explicitly political, with a normative claim of exposing power inequalities and hierarchies (Turunen 2015). CDA rests on the premise that class relations, meaning the inherent and structural power differentials, are the most fundamental way of societal organization (Fairclough 2001: 26). While

from a traditionally positivist vantage point the overt combination of politics and research may sound suspicious, Fairclough's CDA is firmly grounded in the understanding that there is no objective science (Turunen 2015). Therefore, it is better to be open about one's political and normative 'biases' and to espouse transparency, rather than to pretend to be objective and as a result reproduce social inequalities (or ignore their existence) (Fairclough 2001:4). In line with its 'positively' biased position, CDA advocates openly political goals, namely political and social emancipation (Fairclough 2003: 203). Taking into account this perspective, analysts like Bucholtz (2001: 167) have lauded 'the fresh air CDA brings into the academy.' Such openly political attitude is vital from the point of view of feminist research.

Initially, Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis was very text-focused, making the method conceptualized in his earlier work from the 1990s, overly linguistic (Turunen 2015). However, his approach evolved in his later writings towards a more social scientific approach, in which the analysis of discourse is complemented by a broader social analysis (Turunen 2015). This combination of text analysis with social analysis is a crucial point of reference for the dissertation. In his later works, Fairclough does not see discourse as a mere intangible linguistic system (Fairclough 2001:17-18). Quite the contrary, the use of language is necessarily determined by social and political (power) structures in this view. These social structures are often constructed with the use of force. Hence, linguistic conventions are outcomes of force (Fairclough 2001:18). Such a conceptualization leads him to the claim that discourse is 'language as a form of social practice' (Fairclough 2001:18). Next, I discuss briefly three aspects of language and discourse as a form of social practice: its textual, discursive practice, and social practice facets (for a graphic representation, see Figure 3.2).

In Fairclough, discourse understood as text refers to the idea that any linguistic action is also a social action (Turunen 2015). For instance, the act of defining and outlining of political terminology is part of politics itself (Fairclough 2001:19). Discursive practice means that discourse is a 'product' which can spread and be consumed in society. This is the aspect of discourse that most concerns me in this dissertation. Consumption of discourse designates the audience's or the agents' interpretation, and

is ‘an active process of matching features of the utterance at various levels with representations you have stored in your long-term memory’ (Fairclough 2001: 8-9). Social power structures influence and are influenced by discourse (conceptualized as a social practice).

Discourses intervene between the individual and the society and therefore individuals ‘have them in their heads’, but they are also social insofar that they have social sources (Fairclough 2001:20). In this way, Fairclough points to the mutually constitutive relationship between language and social practice. Discourses are socially produced and conveyed; their very nature depends on the social relations and struggles out of which they come (Fairclough 2001:20). Consequently, Fairclough points to the understanding that the discourses we witness as individuals are contingent to the social and political contexts we live in. Both the production and consumption of discourse involve individually held ‘member’s resources’ – a term that refers to the individual’s or the audience’s prior knowledge including language, values, beliefs, assumptions, and cultural references (Turunen 2015).

This premise is important for my research because my member’s resources as an addressee, a consumer of discourse, and a part of the ‘Polish audience’ are crucial to the interpretative work that is needed in Fairclough’s CDA. Accordingly, the power of the discourse stems from the fact that individuals internalize what is socially produced and available to them, and apply the internalized members’ cultural and linguistic capital to position themselves in their social practice, ‘[giving] the forces which shape societies a vitally important foothold in the individual psyche (Fairclough 2001: 20). The dominance and availability of a discourse (its inculcation to new contexts and spreading to new topics) is not automatic and depends on individual cases (Turunen 2015). Fairclough specifies that ‘even powerful discourses such as the new discourses of management (...) may meet levels of resistance which result in them being neither enacted nor inculcated to any degree’ (Fairclough 2003: 209).

The strict or creative ‘reproduction’ of discourses directly relates to the social distribution of power, and ‘if there is a shift in power relations through social struggle,

one can expect transformation of orders of discourse’ (Fairclough 2001: 33).²² So, it is the relations of social power that primarily account for discursive change. Conversely, ‘if power relations remain relatively stable, this may give a conservative quality to reproduction [of discourses].’ (Fairclough 2001:33). It seems that discourse adds to social change if coupled with change in social relations of power (Turunen 2015). This has important implications for the analysis of durability and transformation of hegemonic discourses in politics. Political debates become the site for the manifestation of certain power relations, and therefore do not allow for power-neutral readings.

Therefore, Fairclough conceptualizes power as a force enmeshed with ideology (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1992:24; Fairclough 2001:26). Fairclough argues that those with power have ‘two ways (...) [to] exercise it and keep it: through coercing others to go along with them, with the ultimate sanctions of physical violence or death; or through winning others’ consent to (...) their possession and exercise of power’ (Fairclough 2001:27-28). The understanding of power as force and domination is directly transferred into textual aspects. Fairclough makes the distinction between power *in* discourse and power *behind* discourse (Fairclough 2001:36). The former is characteristic of ‘unequal encounters’ where the discursive power of the superior party gives opportunities and means to control the linguistic exchange (Fairclough 2001:38). Power in discourse can take direct and clear-cut forms, for instance in the case of interactions between the police and the victim (or the guilty), or in subtler forms like cross-cultural encounters (Turunen 2015). Significantly, power in discourse may also manifest itself in the construction of ideal subject positions and aspirational values, like the conjectures on the ideal role of a woman in family.

The power behind discourse is less overt and clear-cut. It reflects the idea that ‘the whole social order of discourse is put together and held together as a hidden effect of power’ (Fairclough 2001: 46). Power behind discourse needs ideology as a structuring force of language. Fairclough (2001:52) locates the power behind discourse in the

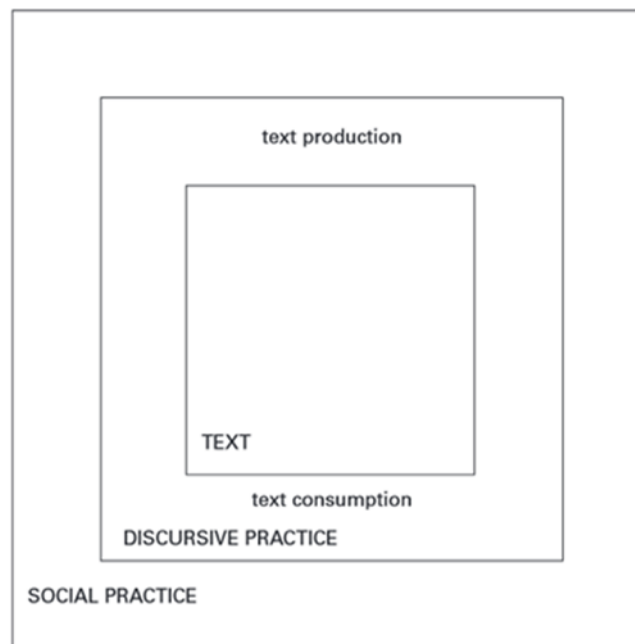
²² See the discussion and definition of ‘orders of discourse’ in the section below of the current chapter.

capability of specific actors to use certain discourses. Importantly, it is a power upheld by, for instance, codes of conduct or government programmes that legislate policy priorities (Fairclough 2001: 52). As a result, individuals do not have equal access to and possibilities of using discourses of power. Accordingly, the availability of and access to discourse is closely related to one's social (power) position.

For Fairclough, the power operating behind discourse gives CDA the legitimacy in pursuing its goal of exploring and exposing of the truth that is disguised by ideology and power structures that tie into various discourses and social practices that maintain unequal relations of power. Hence, analytical work must focus on discursive practices that, according to semantic content and social context, 'produce meanings that tend to escape the attention of lay persons and non-specialist social scientists alike' (Fairclough 2002:7). This again brings in the overt political and normative engagement of the researcher into the practice of critical discourse analysis. The process of making sense of texts becomes inextricably linked with social relations of power. Consequently, the power- and ideology-focus of CDA fits the feminist normative assumptions in my research project.

Operationalizing CDA

As discussed above, I choose CDA as a method because it is explicitly critical in the sense that it aims to reveal the role of discursive practice in the formation of the social world, including social constructions that involve unequal relations of power (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 63). This is critical from the point of view of feminist research. It can be seen in Figure 3.2 that Fairclough (1992) claims that every instance of language use or every utterance is a communicative event that consists of three dimensions. The analysis should focus on: firstly, the linguistic features of the text; then the processes relating to the production and consumption of the text (discursive practice); and thirdly, the wider societal and institutional practice to which the communicative event belongs (social practice) (Fairclough 1992: 73). This method is applied to the analysis of transcripts and videos of plenary debates in the legislature under study. Since the model itself is quite abstract, I proceed to discussing the operationalization of Fairclough's CDA method.

Figure 3.2 Fairclough's three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis.

(Source: Fairclough 1992:73).

Fairclough's model consists of pairing of the semantic and linguistic features of texts with their structural-societal (power) effects. All texts and utterances (see innermost square in Figure 3.2) can be broken down to their vocabulary, grammar, and textual structures. According to Fairclough (1992), the particular linguistic features of texts correspond to different structural-societal effects: they can be experimental, relational, and expressive. Firstly, *experimental* features of vocabulary mean, for instance, classification schemes, ideologically contested words, over-wording or possible meaning interrelations between words. The experimental value of grammar is revealed in the descriptions of processes and participation of agency, in nominalization and in the use of active and passive voice. These correspond to the knowledge and belief structures of a society.

Next, the *relational* features of grammar can be discovered in grammatical moods (declarative, imperative, etc.) as well as in the use of pronouns. These, along with expressive features, reveal social relations and social identities. Lastly, the *expressive* features of vocabulary depict the evaluative character of words used. Grammatically, they can be found in expressive modality, which simply means the degree of certainty

in someone's claim. Accordingly, agency can be hidden or omitted through grammar: nominalizations and the absence of subjects can be interpreted as referring to widely shared understandings. The analysis of the linguistic features of a text should be completed with the investigation of its content so, put simply, not just the grammar and vocabulary, but also their meaning. The analysis of content allows us to see how a text is ideologically linked to various representations of the world and how it reveals collectively held knowledge and social beliefs (Fairclough 2001: 94).

Following the descriptive analysis, the next step is to interpret these connections, namely the connection between the first dimension (text) and the second one (discursive practice), as highlighted in Figure 3.2. The investigation of discursive practice includes the analysis of the narratives and genres which are articulated in the production and consumption of the text (Philips and Jorgensen 2002: 69). Looking at the interdiscursivity (what other different discourses and genres are articulated in one text) and the intertextuality (what other texts the one under analysis draws on) of a text is part of the interpretation process. The aim in my case is to see how MPs try to establish legitimacy in their use of discourses. Importantly, the interpretation also looks at whether the text reproduces or restructures the existing orders of discourse. Here, I explore what network of discourses the discursive practice or utterance belongs to, and how the discourses are distributed and regulated across texts.

Importantly, in my case, the interpretation of discourses is informed by the contextual analysis provided by tracing processes of transformation and the legacies of Europeanization (see chapters 2 and 4). As I discussed in chapter 1, an important aspect of interpreting the discourses is my own 'local' knowledge of the Polish situation. Through interpretation, the text acquires meaning and coherence and is situated in a broader context of social relations. Interpretation involves the interpreter's cognitive capital (member's resources) or background knowledge possessed. Interpretation in Fairclough's model involves deciphering the semantic content of the text and the attribution of meaning to the text. This requires knowledge and familiarity with the language in which the text is written. Certain meanings need to be attributed to, for instance, the notions of 'Polishness' and 'national heritage'.

Interpretation also requires the researcher to build connections between different parts of the text and to explore how texts construct the social world and how they reflect the relations of power prevalent in society. An important stage of interpretation involves the contextualization of the text. Fairclough claims that the social order of power dominates the institutional setting, which, in turn, ‘determines’ the situational setting (Fairclough 2001:122). I discuss below, how I complement this statement with contextual social and historical analysis. In the case of my study, the relevant contexts include, among others: the political situation in the country; the problems facing the state; the post-transformation circumstances; and immediate problems stemming from political struggles.

At the level of interpretation and understanding, Fairclough’s (1992: 237) critical discourse analysis explores the relationship between the discursive practice and the order of discourse. An order of discourse is defined as a complex configuration of discourses and genres within the same *social field* or institution (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 72, 141). Thus, the order of discourse can be taken to denote how different discourses that partly cover the same terrain compete to fill structures with meaning. Here, the complementing notion of Bourdieu’s social field would be seen as a system of social positions structured internally in terms of power relationships, where actors struggle over the appropriation of certain types of capital or power (cf. Bourdieu 1993). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 114) suggest this notion can be applied in critical discourse analysis. The order of discourse is reconceptualised as a potentially conflictual configuration of discourses within a given social field (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). For instance, in the political field the different politicians and political parties struggle to gain political power and they are distributed across the field in terms of their relative strength (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 72).

In other words, the order of discourse is the hierarchy according to which the communicative events, or texts, are articulated. When two or more discourses in the same area present different understandings of the world, it is important to ask and discuss what consequences it would have if one understanding were to be accepted instead of the other. This has particular implications for gendered political analyses. According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 51), it is easier to show that certain

dynamic discursive practices constitute and change the social world when analysing the reproduction and transformation of discourses across a range of texts.

The final and arguably most important step of the applied method is the social and institutional analysis of the texts/communicative events in question. Arguably, this is the part to which Fairclough devotes least room in his analysis. This step involves the mapping of the partly non-discursive, social and cultural relations and structures that shape the broader context of discursive practice – the social matrix of discourse (see the outermost square in Figure 3.2). It is particularly important to take account of the material and institutional anchoring of the order of discourse, as political debates are embedded in wider social practice. It is in the exploration of the relationship between discursive practice and the broader social practice that the study arrives at its final conclusions by looking at the social power implications of the communicative events (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 86). This nonetheless raises the issue of where to draw the line between discourses and how to differentiate between discursive and non-discursive. I follow the division offered by Phillips and Jorgensen (2002: 144) and treat the delimitation as an analytical exercise. I understand discourses as narratives that I identify as a researcher (pinpoint, name, and interpret), rather than as objects that exist in an outlined form in reality, ready to be mapped.

Table 3.2 Outline of the steps taken in the methodological process.

DESCRIPTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information on the immediate context of the text (author, target audience, events referred to). 2. Identification of linguistic markers of the text/communicative event (signs, genres; the linguistic component of the methodology).
INTERPRETATION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Analysis of interdiscursivity and intertextuality. 4. Interpretation of the meanings resulting from the analysis with reference to the theoretical model adopted in the dissertation (gender identities and relationships).
UNDERSTANDING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Analysis of the order of discourse (identify whether discourse is dominant or not). 6. Deconstruction of gender relations in discourses and their implications in the parliament. 7. Based on the contextual background provided through process tracing of transformation and Europeanization, an extensive interpretation of dominant discourses in the case studies on family policy, economic restructuring and nationalism, including a critique of dominant structure and power relations. 8. Comparison and placing into a regional and global context of the debates and discourses in Poland.

(Source: own compilation).

According to Phillips and Jorgensen (2002: 69), discourse analysis alone is not sufficient for the investigation of the wider social practice because, as previously explained, the latter encompasses both discursive and non-discursive elements. For this reason, I use process tracing to complement the final stage of CDA analysis and provide background information on the Polish historical and societal context (see discussion below). The main aim of this approach is to explore the links between language use and social practice and the focus is on the role of discursive practices in the maintenance of the social order and in driving social change (cf. Phillips and Jorgensen 2002). To help operationalize this method, the structure of the empirical chapters follows questions that are central to CDA.

Table 3.3 Operationalizing critical discourse analysis.

On the object	What/who is being talked about?
On the speakers	Who is speaking?
On the themes	What kinds of subjects and values are produced?
On the authority	How is truth being created?
On the rules	What can and cannot be said?

(Source: based on Trakilović 2016).

Based on this operationalization, I divide my analysis in the empirical chapters into discursive fields. Discursive fields can be thought of as ‘embedding’ concepts in that they reference broader enveloping contexts in which discussions, decisions, and actions take place.

Towards a Feminist CDA

A feminist approach to critical discourse analysis cannot remain descriptive and neutral, since the interests guiding it aim to uncover or make transparent processes and mechanisms that perpetuate injustice, inequality, manipulation, sexual discrimination in both overt and subtle, pernicious forms (Wodak 1989; Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002:20). On the one hand, a CDA approach to gender makes it difficult to make global statements about women’s and men’s language as the same discourse is usually voiced by different sexes. On the other hand, however, it does allow for the tracing of discursive construction of femininities and masculinities. In fact, current research validates the view that discursive approaches to the study of politics are ‘particularly suited to explore the way power works in framing processes’ in debates (Verloo and Lombardo 2007: 9).

In her analysis of the Swedish military, Kronsell (2006) conceptualizes these characteristics as prevalent in institutions where masculinity is not just a trait attributed in gender, but an almost moral norm, and where silence on gender is a determining characteristic of those institutions, indicating a degree of normality and simply ‘how

things are' (Kronsell 2006: 109). Kronsell (2006: 117) shows how, by turning to symbols and procedures in institutional practice, we can find out how gender relations are played out. 'Norms of organizations, like norms of hegemonic masculinity, are embedded in institutions as rituals, procedures, routines, and symbols' (Kronsell 2006: 117). What is more, by interviewing women in such contexts and 'breaking the silence', it is possible to deconstruct the notions of gender identity and the linked characteristics of women and men as citizens or politicians.

Hence, by looking at how discourses about women and men, femininity and masculinity are present in parliament, I investigate the ideas about gender relations within a specific case study analysis. Such dominant or hegemonic discourses of femininity and masculinity are interpreted as affecting the lives of many women and men in Polish society. These discourses are called dominant or hegemonic so as to highlight the power they exert in society (Bacchi 2005).²³ This is crucial, as the power of discourse especially affects the possibility for actors to challenge existing hegemonic discourses (Verloo and Lombardo 2007: 9).

Limitations of and alternatives to CDA

The use of CDA reveals interesting aspects of political debates that are especially relevant for this study. It allows us to realize how a discourse can be directed against a competing discourse in society. Nonetheless, there is one main shortcoming connected with the CDA method as put forward in Fairclough's work (Turunen 2015). Arguably, there is no evidence that discourses are interpreted according to the same intention as they are produced. Going back to the level of consumption of discourse, there is a problem in Fairclough around the hermeneutic task of 'pinning down' interpretation, given that individuals have the capacity to interpret texts differently, based on their own cognitive capital. Yet, while the role of interpretation remains ambiguous, Fairclough does acknowledge its importance and attributes to it a degree of independence from social relations. He also treats it as a mirror image of text

²³ At the same time, it is very important for feminist scholarship to allow room for actors and subjects to move within the constraints imposed by hegemonic discourses (resulting in change).

production. He therefore asserts that the social relations of power determine the discourses circulating in society. This makes it easy for him to externalize the problem of interpretation from the available material itself and makes it dependent on social relations of power, the analysis of which ultimately depends, on the researcher's choice. However, Fairclough gives some arguments to counter this problem. He argues that individual interpretations are deeply engrained in societal processes and necessarily take recourse in collectively held discourses. These, in turn, are conditioned by societal structures (Fairclough 2001: 26). Hence, societal structures limit the number of possible interpretations.

What CDA makes possible is the focus on the relations of power between the politically hegemonic supporters and the subordinated *others*. To counter shortcomings in his writings, Fairclough explicitly calls for interdisciplinary approaches in order to solve the problem of having insufficient textual material to interpret social and political situations and their connections. His approach then moves beyond a determinist and traditionally positivist concept of causality, providing instead a reflexive perspective and a contextualized and dynamic way of interpreting meaning (cf. Kulawik 2009). Arguably, when combined, different forms of knowledge will produce not a universal understanding but a broader, albeit contingent understanding of the nexus of gender, institutions, and discourse in legislatures (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 155). This in a way plays into Donna Haraway's (1988) notion of 'situated knowledge' that needs to take into account the place from which one speaks and its cultural and political meaning that depends on the researcher's own reflexivity and positioning in my case.

Understandably, there can be no guarantee that consumers of discourse understand the text or communicative event in line with the intentions of the producers of this discourse. The problem of establishing what in fact is interpreted as distinct from what is produced has been a source of much criticism targeted against CDA (Widdowson 1995, 1996; Schegloff 1997). I tackle this issue by using extensive material in the form of numerous debates. I am also consciously subscribing to the understanding that my interpretation is only one of the possible. I reconstruct the process of the discourse production and analyse the 'product' itself – the discursive constructs of subjects and

values in Polish political debates. What makes my interpretation plausible is that it is supported and enhanced by the knowledge of the context and backed by relevant scholarly literature, i.e. my member's resources that are engrained in Polish social practice (cf. Philips and Jorgensen 2002). As argued, one of the aims of this dissertation is to combine Polish insights, personal knowledge with transnational literature. I supplement this by providing the social and historical background. Within the analysed debates, I point to which aspects of the discussed themes are important. The interpretation can thus be enhanced with the help of the social context in which the text occurs.

An alternative discursive approach to the gendered study of politics was proposed in the use of critical frame analysis in the Policy Frames and Implementation Problems: the Case of Gender Mainstreaming (MAGEEQ) research project.²⁴ Within the discourse analysis tradition, strategic or critical frame analysis tries to examine precisely how social actors manoeuvre within discursive limits to shape issues in ways that advance their specific political projects (cf. Verloo 2001; 2005). Mieke Verloo's (2007) approach (roughly basing on Carol Bacchi's work, 2005) calls for reflection on both the discourses within which actors operate and the active deployment of concepts and categories for political purposes. A framing methodology shows the ways in which the framing of a concept affects how policy-makers and legislators think about an issue.

Initially, this research project attempted to use a critical framing methodology. However, Verloo's (2005; 2007) focus on the nexus between diagnosis (what is wrong?) – attribution of causality (who/what is responsible for the problem?) – prognosis (what should be done about it?) – and call for action (who should do it?) has proved difficult to operationalize given the aim of my study – the power and operation of discourses in creating subjects and values in politics. Hence, the thesis switches the focus from policy adoption and implementation (which is the crux of critical frame

²⁴ For details of the background, aims, and results of the MAGEEQ project refer to the website: <http://www.mageeq.net/>

analysis that talks about *policy* frames) to the study of political debates and their power-creating capabilities.

In contrast to critical frame analysis, the central thesis of CDA is concerned with the extra-textual relations of power that can explain the text (the debate in my case). Fairclough argues that, ‘the way in which society organizes its economic production, and the nature of the relationships established in production between social classes, are fundamental structural features which determine others’ (Fairclough 2001:26). For CDA, the ultimate source of interpretation is not really text, but the dominant social relations of power which the text reflects (Turunen 2015).²⁵ This is its strength in the context of gendered political research. The main analytical effort of CDA lies in the connection between discursive practices and social practices, that is, the way in which social conditions determine possible interpretations. Because of this, the distinction between the production and the interpretation of discourse fades away.

Consequently, discursive change in hegemonies is possible only if there exists a social struggle that alters the fundamental structures of society, that is, those of the relations of discursive production. Fairclough does not, however, treat actors as simple puppets of discourse; he acknowledges the possibility of resistance (Turunen 2015). This is an acknowledgement of social facts: resistance and non-compliance do, indeed, happen. However, CDA is primarily geared to the exploration and exposure of hegemonic discourses, as such CDA alone makes it difficult to explain change. This is not an issue for my dissertation because discussing discursive change over time is not within the scope of this work. My aim is to expose the discourses in the studied timeframe (2011-2015), rather than highlighting their real and potential evolution (an issue I come back to in the conclusions). Nonetheless, I complement the understanding part of Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis by applying process tracing methods, in order not to omit ideas of change altogether.

²⁵ CDA as a theory of society argues for the dialectical relationship between social forces and the discourse, but critical discourse analysis as textual analysis seeks explanation for the text from the social relations of power.

Process tracing ‘lite’

The view expressed by Phillips and Jorgensen (2002: 69) that CDA needs a complementary method or an additional level to fully understand and interpret the discursive and non-discursive element informs and underlies my decision to match CDA with another research method. Process tracing, then, can be seen as a way of ‘boosting’ within-case analysis (Kenny 2009). Importantly for this research, it encompasses an element of historical narrative, but more frequently it is understood as a method of within-case analysis used to evaluate causal processes (cf. Hall 2003; Collier et al. 2004; George and Bennett 2005; Strahan 2007).

Conversely, the dissertation makes no claims on looking for causality (as I discuss in the later sections) and largely rejects the positivist language, adopting a flexible – ‘lite’ – understanding of process tracing that is more compatible with the discursive and interpretive approach of the project (cf. Kenny 2009: 97). My application of process tracing, hence, consists of theory-informed (see chapter 2) sequential narrative. The aim is to trace, outline, and connect the stages of a particular process, enabling me to identify the critical junctures, legacies, and contingent reasons for the emergence of particular gendered ‘losers’ in political discourses through the dynamic of events over time (cf. George and McKeown 1985; Tarrow 2004; Falleti 2006).

In applying the ‘lite’ process tracing method, the thesis provides a detailed reconstruction of the temporal sequence of transformation and Europeanization processes in Poland (see following chapter). One of the main advantages of this approach, apart from complementing the CDA, is that it allows for the ‘placing of politics in time’ (Pierson 2000, 2004). In the next chapter, I systematically situate particular moments (critical junctures of transformation and Europeanization) in the context of a longer temporal and spatial framework (cf. Kenny 2009). This allows for the improvement of the understanding of complex political dynamics and discursive interplay (cf. Pierson and Skocpol 2002; Hall 2003; Thelen 2003, 2004; George and Bennett 2005; Falleti 2006; Steinmo 2008; Kenny 2009).

Sources and data collection

The two focus areas of family/welfare politics and the nation are followed in the plenary debates. The timeframe encompasses a single parliamentary term from 2011 to 2015, which was the seventh term of the so-called Third Republic. The material for the chapter on ‘war on gender’ includes apart from relevant utterances in parliament, media reports and quotes by church officials. Since discourse encompasses not only written and spoken language but also visual images, I look not only at debate transcripts available in the Polish *Sejm* archive, but also at video materials provided by that archive. The sources used in the dissertation are publicly available. Thanks to the abundance of publicly-available material, there was no need to include interviews for further data collection. As I discuss below, consultations took place, but they were aimed at improving the research design and discourse interpretation and did not directly generate data for the dissertation.

Data collection was performed first in the *Sejm* archive in the fall of 2013 (accessible by the public after prior arrangement of passes). The bulk of data collection and source selection has been subsequently done through the online archive of the parliament available at: www.sejm.gov.pl. I selected the pertinent debates according to the thematic key and the focus areas I chose for analysis, guided by the theory insights from multiple scholarly literature presented in chapter 2. I selected parliamentary debates focusing on the family and the nation, as important policy and discursive spheres that play a crucial role in the construction of gendered subjects. I studied the construction of subjectivities within these debates and how these constructions are, in turn, deployed in parliament for particular purposes. During the 2011-2015 parliamentary term, there were 102 plenary sessions of the *Sejm*. I selected 74 of them as relevant, based on the agenda points. Overall, over 200 individual parliamentary agenda points (debates) were selected and analysed from the seventh parliamentary term (for a full list divided by chapter, see Appendix I). To allow for transparency, all quotes from the parliamentary debates under analysis follow the format: name of the speaker, date of the speech, the number of the parliamentary meeting, the page numbers as they appear in the official stenographs.

Reflexivity, replicability, generalizability, and ethical considerations

From a traditionally positivist point of view, the methodological approach of the thesis may raise issues of reliability and replicability. Positivist research attempts to draw scientifically valid conclusions about the wider population based on the samples under analysis (cf. Blaikie 2010: 192-194, 217). As I argued above, a positivist approach is not appropriate or applicable for the subject under investigation. The dissertation is committed to a feminist interpretative and discursive approach. My findings concern the power relationships between discourses and the gendered construction of political subjects and values in the parliamentary debates of the Polish *Sejm*. As argued in chapter 1, these contributions matter because the parliament and its deputies hold considerable discursive power in the national arena. Looking for a causal impact or correlation between the discourses and their work on the general population, the consumers of the discourses, is beyond the scope of this work.

This chapter has illustrated that interpretation and my own reflexivity are central to the application of the CDA method. Since one of the aims of this dissertation is to infuse the theoretical and conceptual framework with my own experience and ‘local’ knowledge, I understand my own reflexivity as one of the main concepts in the research design of the dissertation. A compelling argument to explain this position is made by Joanna Regulaska (1998: 42):

As I was born and spent many of my early years in a country that is “waiting in the queue to be integrated”, but much of my professional life in one of the countries that determines that queue, I have experienced otherness in numerous ways, and I am aware how these encounters have shaped my own ideas and attitudes towards exclusion and marginalization. (...) This (...) represents my own resistance to forced exclusions.

Instead of focusing on the replicability of findings, I have taken several measures to ensure that the research is credible and well-informed (Lincoln and Guba 1985). To optimize the plausibility of the arguments and interpretations made within the bounds of this hermeneutic approach, my observations and findings were discussed in consultations with analysts and scholars in Poland and in scientific conferences. These contextual discussions were used to guide my thinking and to confront my ideas. I

spoke with feminist activists from *Kongres Kobiet*, *Feminoteka* and *Federacja na Rzecz Planowania Rodziny*. I also benefited from more academic discussions at the *Instytut Studiów Zaawansowanych*, and at the special seminar on Critical Discourse Analysis of Polish Public Discourse with Dr Kinga Dunin. Moreover, I conducted six interviews with MPs from PO, SLD, and TR and received answers to questionnaires from two PiS deputies, which I used as background pointing me to different interpretations of the political debates. Hence, from the point of view of academic ethics, my research did not raise any specific concerns. The sources under analysis are publicly available (also online at the time of writing). There was some direct engagement with policy-makers and activists as well as researchers in Warsaw, but this did not produce primary textual materials for the dissertation.

The Polish case

In the dissertation, I map out the gendered discursive construction of subjectivities and values in the Polish parliament. By scrutinizing parliamentary debates, I want to show the power of dominant discourses and trace what is silenced. Accordingly, my critical discourse analysis within the parliament focuses on two main themes where gendered political discourse can be best observed, family and the nation. These cases are selected to avoid the production of ideal types and, first and foremost, to map out the contradictions and varieties (tensions and interrelationships) within and between discourses in Poland. So, I consider the discourses that are dominant in one context, but perhaps cannot be articulated in another, with the aim of revealing silences and looking at their informal institutional causes.

According to Gerber's (2011) and Gwiazda's (2016) analyses of Polish politics, Poland as a case study can be viewed as an 'extreme' (Bryman 2008) or 'atypical' case that can help us understand the deeper causes behind a given problem and its consequences (Flyvbjerg 2006: 229). As I discussed in chapter 1, against the European and regional background, the Polish case is unique in several features: the role of the church in politics, the lauded success of its transformation, and the good macroeconomic statistics since transformation and post-accession. However, it is also at the same time a symptomatic case for broader regional and global trends of backlash

against economic globalization, Europeanization, and disappointment with the workings of liberal democracy in practice. Therefore, the Polish case can provide insights into the dynamics of regime changes, as well as into the resistances, blockages and tensions that such transformations produce, but is not necessarily representative of the whole Eastern European region.

Single case studies have been criticized mainly for their weak generalizability (Gerring 2004; Lieberman 2005), but the premise of this criticism rests on the positivist assumption that large numbers of cases produce more general valid principles (Yanow et al. 2008). As Meryl Kenny (2009) has argued, it is important not to misinterpret these limitations through ‘the prism of statistical methods’ (George and Bennett 2005: 22). By applying the methodology outlined in this chapter, the dissertation situates the single case study within a larger temporal and spatial framework and traces historical and political developments, thereby providing a deep within-case analysis.

The aim of this research, therefore, is not inference about causality, but the in-depth exploration of a puzzle that allows for interpretative understanding of the processes and of their consequences in the case study. The goal is analytical description that can be useful in understanding wider phenomena. The selection of within-case focus areas, like family politics, nationalism, and the ‘war on gender’ is based on their relevance to the traditional feminist topics; their representativeness in terms of current regional trends (nationalism, ultra-conservatism and anti-feminism), with the ‘war on gender’ pulling both the old and the new together. In keeping with the discursive and interpretive approach of the thesis, the goal is not to arrive at some sort of original ‘truth’ or singularly ‘right’ interpretation about the gendered processes, events, and meanings, but to shed light into the ways in which particular constructions and meanings (subjects) are discursively constructed at a specific time and site.

A note on Polish politics

This dissertation focuses on the political developments of the so-called ‘Third Republic’, which was established after the fall of state socialism in 1989. According to the official and popular count, the ‘First Republic’ was the ‘Republic of Nobility’

(*Rzeczpospolita Szlachecka*) that lasted until the third partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795.²⁶ The ‘Second Republic’ was the post-First World War state (1918-1939) and the ‘Third Republic’ came after the PRL. The years of state socialism (1945-1989) are not counted as a republic.

The legal basis of the Third Republic – the Republic of Poland (RP), is the Constitution of April 1997.²⁷ Poland today is a parliamentary republic with a bicameral (asymmetric) system.²⁸ The system of government is founded on the separation of and balance between the legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Legislative power is vested in the *Sejm* and the Senate, executive power is the President of the Republic of Poland and the Council of Ministers, and the courts and tribunals constitute the judicial power (Art. 10 §1 and §2 Constitution of RP). According to Art. 11 of the Constitution, Poland ensures ‘freedom for the creation and functioning of political parties’. Political parties are voluntary and their purpose is to impact the formulation of legislation and policy by democratic means (Art. 11 §1 Constitution of RP).

In the seventh parliamentary term under analysis (2011-2015) the government drawn from the parliamentary majority included a (center-)right coalition (in power for the second term, since 2007) of Civic Platform – PO (senior partner) and the Polish Peasant’s Party – PSL (junior partner). PO (*Platforma Obywatelska*) was the largest party in the *Sejm* with 202 seats (out of 460). Ideologically, PO pools together Christian democratic, centrist, conservative, and liberal ideas. PSL (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*) was the junior coalition partner of PO with 39 seats. It proclaims centrist, agrarian, and Christian democratic ideas, in practice it represents conservative, traditionalist, and decidedly catholic positions.

²⁶ The term ‘partitions’ refers to the final period in the history of the First Polish Republic (the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). The three partitions took place towards the end of the 18th century (1772, 1793, 1795), divided the Commonwealth territory between its neighbours (Russia, Prussia, and Austria), and ended the existence of the Polish-Lithuanian state, resulting in the elimination of the sovereign Poland for 123 years.

²⁷ I am using the official English translation of the Polish Constitution, which is available at: <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm> (accessed October 2016).

²⁸ It is a ‘democratic state ruled by law and implementing the principles of social justice’ (Art. 2 Constitution of RP). According to Art. 4 §1 of the Constitution, ‘supreme power in the Republic of Poland shall be vested in the Nation’.

The biggest opposition political group was the right-wing Law and Justice Party – PiS (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*), with 134 seats. It espouses Christian democratic, national-catholic, and conservative ideas. There were also two other centre-left (SLD – Alliance of Democratic Left) and liberal (TR – Your Movement) opposition groups amounting to about 10% of the parliamentary seats between them. SLD (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*) was the second biggest opposition party and had 34 seats in the *Sejm*. It declares social democratic and social liberal ideas. During the seventh legislative term, the parliamentary club ‘Your Movement’ (TR) eventually fell apart, as it lost the needed quorum (at least 15 MPs), due to numerous defections (in the fall of 2014 and March 2015). The political party continued to exist and its remaining 4 MPs formed a parliamentary ‘circle’ called ‘Palikot’s Movement’.

In the latter half of the 2011-2015 parliamentary term there were two more splinter right-wing opposition parties, which were not elected but broke off from either PO or PiS and together they formed the United Right PR (Jarosław Gowin’s Poland Together and Poland United). PR (*Polska Razem – Zjednoczona Prawica*) was a splinter right-wing parliamentary grouping which had 15 deputies in the *Sejm* and did not run under this name in the 2011 elections. There was also a group of independent non-aligned deputies, composed of MPs that defected mostly from TR during the seventh parliamentary term (36 MPs as of 2015).

Women made up 24% of the deputies in the lower chamber and 13% of the Senate, which gave the whole of the parliament an average of 18.5% of women among its MPs.²⁹ The average age of the MPs was 50. At the end of the parliamentary term in question, a woman held the main position of the Speaker, or Marshall, of the *Sejm*.³⁰ The Presidium of the parliament included 3 women and 3 men; the equality in numbers was also a late change (June 2015).³¹ There were no women at the head of any of the

²⁹ Sourced from the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the basis of information provided by National Parliaments by 1st February 2015, available at: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (accessed June 2016).

³⁰ Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska took over the post from Radosław Sikorski in June 2015.

³¹ The Presidium of the *Sejm* is composed of the Marshal and Deputy Marshals of the *Sejm*. Traditionally, the composition of this collective body of the *Sejm* reflects the political diversity of the House and has one representative of each of the political parties.

political clubs, circles, or groups in the parliament (although some parliamentary clubs have had women in deputy chairperson positions), which means that normally the Convent of Seniors included only 3 women for its 11 members.³²

Out of the 27 standing legislative committees, women were in charge of 4: the Committee for EU Affairs, the Committee of Public Finance, the Committee for Culture and the Media, and the Committee of Justice and Human Rights. Out of the then running 4 extraordinary committees, a woman headed 1 – the Committee on Curbing Bureaucracy. The parliamentary composition suggests that due to the dominant ‘maleness’ of the *Sejm*, we can expect some particular type of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ (Connell 1987; 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005) as well as an ‘emphasized femininity’ (Connell 1987) to emerge as institutional norms. The expectation is a division of power or a hierarchy between masculinities and femininities in the parliament as to what women and men are expected to be dealing with and the ways they say things and produce discourse.

The workings of the Sejm

Since the Polish parliament is the main site of my research, it is important to outline its main modes of operation as well as its main processes. The following section details the legislative process (Figure 3.3) of the *Sejm* and the main responsibilities and structures of the institution (Figure 3.4). Institutionally, the legislative branch in Poland includes the Lower House, the *Sejm* (*Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*), and the Upper House, the Senate (*Senat Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*) (Art. 10 §2, Art. 95 §1 Constitution of RP). Sometimes both houses are referred to only as the *Sejm*.³³ Whenever I use the word ‘*Sejm*’, I am referring to the Lower House only. Due to the

³² For a diagram of the structures of the parliament see Figure 3.4 in chapter 3.

³³ When the two chambers sit together, they are known as the National Assembly (*Zgromadzenie Narodowe*). The National Assembly is convened only during the swearing of the oath of a new president, taking an indictment against the president or cancelling the powers of the president due to her/his health reasons.

asymmetrical (superior) legislative power position of the lower chamber, my analysis focuses only on the *Sejm* and omits the debates in the Senate.³⁴

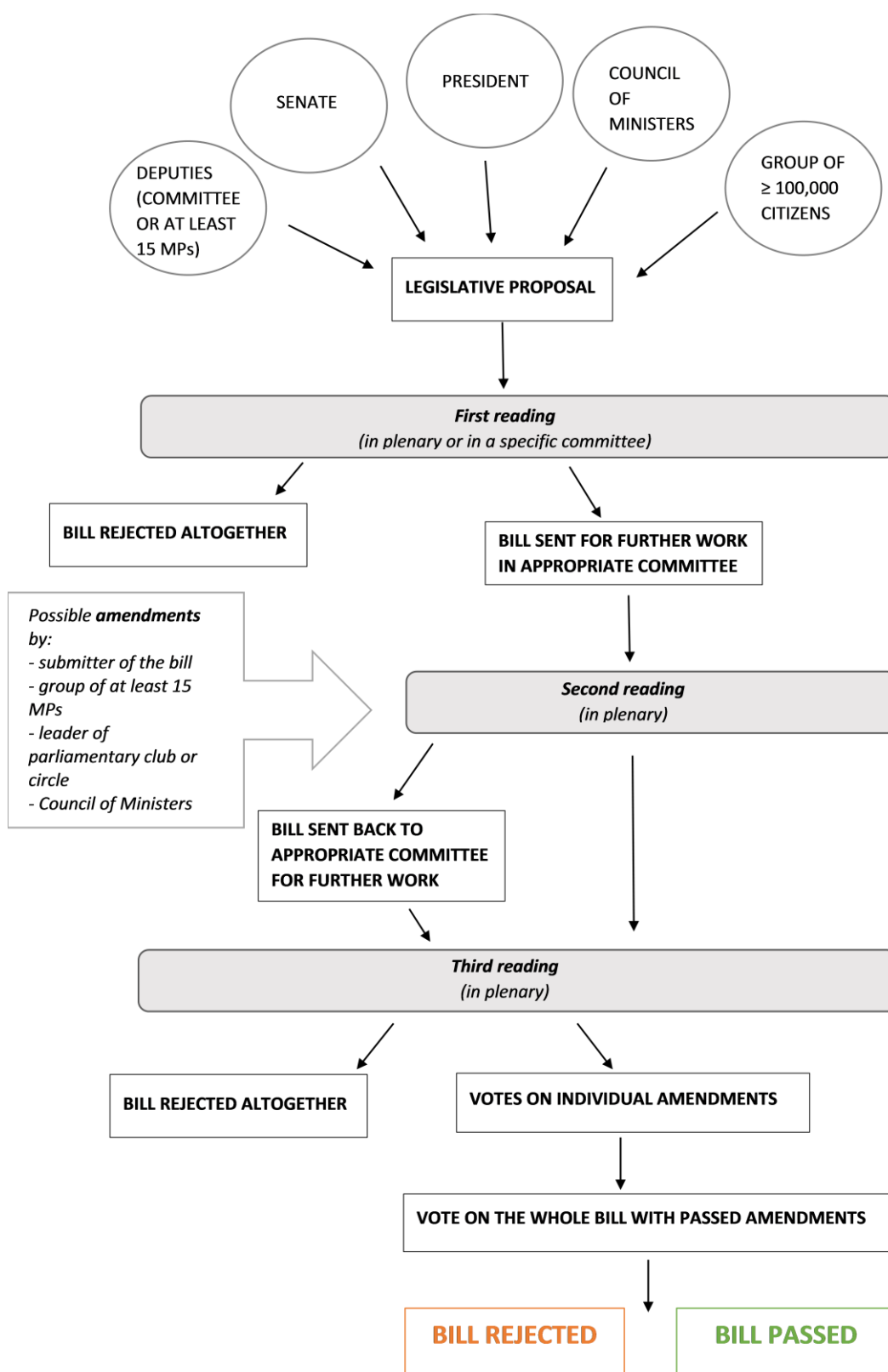
The Polish *Sejm* is the institution where new legislation is debated, and parliamentary committees in parliament are the organs for working on the details of the proposed legislation. Both chambers of the Polish parliament are elected for four-year terms in direct elections. The MPs are elected through a multi-party and open-list proportional representation system, with a 5% threshold for political parties (seats are allocated according to the D'Hondt method, favouring bigger winners).³⁵ The Prime Minister is appointed by the President with the approval of the majority of the parliament.

The highest position in parliament is the Marshall – the Speaker. The *Sejm* elects a Marshall and Vice-Marshalls (who preside over plenary debates). The parliament also establishes standing parliamentary committees (and if necessary ad-hoc special parliamentary committees). I show a schematic outline of the legislative process in the *Sejm* in Figure 3.3. Within the legislative process, the right to initiate bills belongs to the deputies, the Senate, the President, the Council of Ministers, or a group of citizens of more than 100,000 signatories. The *Sejm* debates the proposed bills in up to three readings. During the first two readings, deputies, the Council of Ministers and the representative of the group of citizens that has initiated a legislative proposal can introduce amendments; the Senate may introduce changes only after the *Sejm* has passed the bill on its third reading. The *Sejm* passes legislative bills on a simple majority basis, in the presence of at least half of all the 460 MPs.

³⁴ The role of the Senate in legislating is secondary: it passes judgement on the proposed bills by either accepting them, suggesting changes, or rejecting them altogether. However, the *Sejm* can overrule the Senate's decisions by absolute majority (231 or more votes). The procedures for laws amending the Constitution are somewhat different, and the powers of the Senate are then greater.

³⁵ Senators are elected by plurality vote in single-member constituencies after the electoral law was changed in 2011. Candidates cannot run both for the *Sejm* and the Senate.

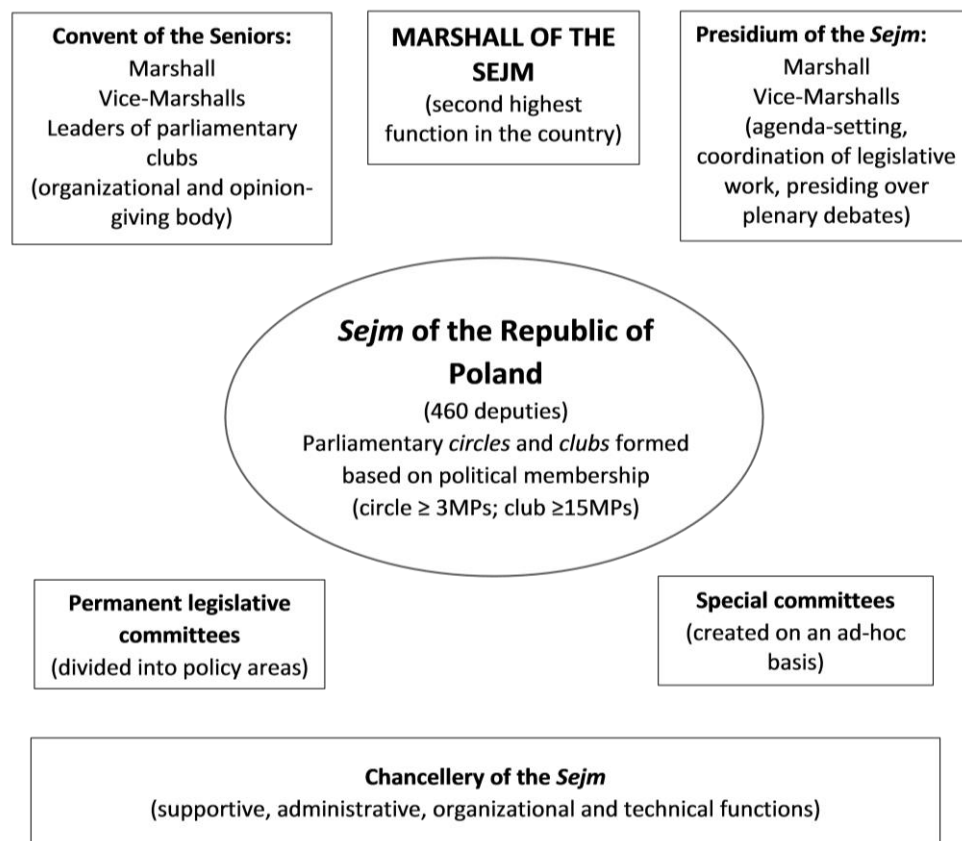
Figure 3.3 The legislative process of the *Sejm*.



(Source: own compilation based on sejm.gov.pl).

The Marshall of the *Sejm* determines the schedule of the parliamentary sittings and the daily agenda. The Marshall consults the Convent of Seniors of the *Sejm* (see Figure 3.4). The Convent of Seniors of the *Sejm* (*Konwent Seniorów*) normally represents the MPs in matters of the daily workings of the parliament.³⁶ MPs are divided into parliamentary clubs and circles based on political party affiliation. A parliamentary club (*Klub Sejmowy* or *Klub Poselski*) is formed by MPs that share political sympathies.³⁷ In practice, all political parties that have been elected to the parliament usually form clubs. A deputy can only belong to one club or circle.

Figure 3.4 The organizational structure of the *Sejm*.



(Source: own compilation based on sejm.gov.pl)

³⁶ The Convent of the Seniors consists of the Marshall and all Vice-Marshalls, spokespersons of all parliamentary clubs and circles (if their membership is less than 15).

³⁷ There must be at least 15 deputies for the group to be called a 'club'; otherwise the MPs form a 'circle' (minimum 3 MPs).

The formal institutional character of parliamentary debates is regulated through the Constitution of the RP, the Resolution on the Regulations of the *Sejm* (1992) (*Uchwała Regulaminu Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*), and the Resolution on the Ethical Principles of the Members of the Parliament (1998) (*Uchwała Zasady Etyki Poselskiej*).³⁸ One significant difference between the Polish parliament and those of many European countries is the fact the deputies' presence in the parliamentary sittings is strictly controlled in each plenary (Turunen 2015). The rules governing the Polish parliamentary debate are also quite stringent and set a predictable order for the plenary debates (Turunen 2015). The Marshall of the *Sejm* determines the speaking order. The secretary of the *Sejm* takes down the speeches (Art. 179 *Regulamin Sejmu*). During the debate, MPs' speeches are limited to 10 minutes, and speeches on behalf of parliamentary clubs to 20 minutes; other time limits are generally determined by the Marshall in consultation with the MPs. Despite these strict regulations, the practice of the *Sejm* can be rather relaxed and, for instance, time limits are regularly exceeded by most speakers.

Conclusions

This chapter stressed the importance and relevance of critical discourse analysis as an approach and as a method to feminist research. I argued that CDA aims to access how ideological and power structures are reproduced by subjects. This chapter also gave an overview of Norman Fairclough's CDA and proposed a way of implementing it in the present research, complementing it with a simplified version of process tracing in order to provide the essential background and contextual framework to apply the theory and methodology to the empirical part of this work. This chapter also provided an outline of the cases analysed in this dissertation. Based on the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological frameworks discussed thus far, the next chapter embarks on discussing

³⁸ There are no official or established English translations of the Regulations of the *Sejm* or the Ethical Principles of the Members of the Parliament and therefore all translations from the documents are my own.

the essential historical and political background, in preparation for the application of critical discourse analysis to the empirical cases in chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Chapter 4: Gender inequality legacies of transformation and trajectories of democratization in Poland

'Poland looked ugly in the red dress, but will be happy wearing the blue one with yellow stars'

Ewa Charkiewicz³⁹

As I have argued in the previous chapters, in order to understand the gendered and discursive consequences of the post-state socialist transformation, it is vital to understand the paths and the legacies in the region. Exploring the discursive constructions of gender in parliament calls for the exploration of several layers of unconscious gendering over time. This chapter provides the socio-historical and economic context to process trace the key dynamics and expectations concerning democratization and transformation in the region and in Poland specifically. As the opening quote suggests, I discuss the trends and processes that led to the rejection of the state socialist legacies. First, I discuss the general historical background and show the consequences of how the transformation was gendered, but also classist, in how it operated and produced discursive sources for the contemporary political debates. The main questions addressed in the chapter are: what were the paths and trajectories in the transformation and democratization processes in Poland? What are the legacies pertinent for the unequal discursive constructions in politics today? How are they gendered and how do they reproduce political exclusion and discursive marginalization?

I argue that since we cannot observe the transformation itself in parliament today, we can see the residual discourses and the nationalist-catholic responses to them that have remained influential until today. Transformation, democratization, and Europeanization, as discussed in this chapter (and earlier in chapter 2), mostly consisted of neoliberal market reforms (Charkiewicz 2006; Bobako 2011; Mrozik 2012). Polish elites implemented them in order to re-establish or reconnect the Polish economy to the global market. I argue that, as such, democratization and

³⁹ *'W czerwonej sukience jesteś brzydka, a w niebieskiej w żółte gwiazdki będziesz szczęśliwa.'* Ewa Charkiewicz, Biblioteka Think Tanku Feministycznego (2006:9).

Europeanization were stand-in processes of globalization in Poland. According to Polish critical scholars, neoliberal market values were internalized utterly and completely and there is no counter-hegemony to these discourses (Leder 2014; Sowa 2015). The social norms of hyper-individualism, self-reliance, economic success, and rejection of social solidarity were a by-product of accepting first the ‘shock therapy’ after 1989, and then of the mostly market-oriented and economy-related *acquis communautaire* of the EU on paper.

The rejection of state socialism, which nominally proclaimed itself an egalitarian system, and the lack of attention to social inequality issues in the post-1989 Polish politics produced a vehement reaction in the form of resurgent nostalgic ethnic nationalism, militant catholicism, and social conservatism. An important argument in this chapter is the interconnection and the impact of the ‘two monstrous machines’, or what the Polish feminist critic Ewa Charkiewicz (2006) called the neoliberal and nationalist-catholic camps, holding sway in Polish politics. To explore these further, this chapter again combines a number of literatures, Polish or Eastern European, and Anglophone conceptualizations of the democratization and transformation processes, on the one hand, and the feminist literature on gender equality, on the other.

While the early ‘transition’ literature from the 1990s may already be outdated, its impetus can still provide insight into the later developments in Eastern Europe. Accordingly, it is pertinent to establish how this scholarly literature saw the effects of the transformation processes in terms of gender as well as the impact of the reconfiguration of gender roles during the democratization and Europeanization of the region. To begin with, I trace how the literature conceptualizes the period following the fall of state socialism in 1989. The key themes concern the losers of transformation and the societal anger that subsequently had to find an outlet. Next, I look at the feminist interrogations of these processes and trace gender inequality as a consequence of predating patriarchal structures, the changes in the understanding of the private and public spheres, and the politicization of gender difference.

I show the gendered context in which Eastern Europe, and Poland specifically, operates. The final section addresses the implementation of gender equality policy

post-accession and the backlashes against it. The themes described in this chapter provide a background in terms of history, politics, and economy for the analysis of discourses that follow in the subsequent chapters. They outline the limits, scope, and basis for the creation and use of discourses within Polish politics today, providing sources for interdiscursivity and common frames of meaning for political actors and users of political discourse.

The socio-economy of transformation and its legacies

The Polish post-state socialist transformation, especially in the 1990s, was the product of American orthodox neoliberal market proponents (such as Jeffrey Sachs and David Lipton), implemented by their Polish ideological equivalents – Leszek Balcerowicz and Waldemar Kuczyński, typical apparently non-political ‘economic experts’ (cf. Klein 2007). Polish political elites enacted and implemented regime change in the form of economic and political transformation according to the dominant spirit of the day (Dunn 2004; Klein 2007; Charkiewicz 2011). This period was dominated by arguments around the ‘end of history’ and the victory of liberal democracy and market economic orthodoxy, which were broadly seen as the ultimate end goal of human social, political, and economic development (cf. Fukuyama 1989, 1992). In practice, ‘transition’ was imposed in the form of ‘shock therapy’ (Klein 2007) consisting of savage cuts to welfare, waves of mass privatization, and tax cuts, which exacerbated social inequalities, poverty, and unemployment.

Mainstream macroeconomic analysis has highlighted the positive aggregated data of Poland’s post-transformation economy. The size of the Polish gross domestic product (GDP) makes it the sixth economy in the EU, as of 2009.⁴⁰ According to the Main Statistical Office of Poland, in 2010, the Polish economic growth rate was 3.9%, which was one of the best results in Europe (GUS 2011). In fact, Polish GDP growth has been uninterrupted since 1992 (GUS 2011); the country did not experience recession after 2008, unlike other European economies. Thus, commentators report the

⁴⁰The full story is available at: <http://finanse.wp.pl/kat,9231,title,Polska-szosta-gospodarka-Unii-Europejskiej-Holendrzy-ogladaja-nasze-plecy,wid.11805963,wiadomosc.html> (Accessed November 2016).

impressive accumulated economic growth of 53% between 2003 and 2014 (Tycner 2016). According to the Main Statistical Office, unemployment rates have been dropping slowly but steadily since the early pre-accession years – from around 20% in 2002 to approximately 10% in 2015 (GUS 2016).⁴¹ Average incomes have also been rising and reached approximately £790 per month in 2015 (GUS 2016).⁴²

However, all the above indices miss the reality of post-transformation costs and effects on the Polish society at large (Debski 2010; Sowa 2015). An aggregated analysis disregards societal complexities and the different impact of transformation on different social groups. The economic gains and the ‘successes of transformation’ were not evenly distributed. Starting from the early years of the transformation, women’s unemployment was higher than men’s (Regulska 1998). Official recorded women’s unemployment reached 10.5% in 2013, while men’s was 9% (GUS 2014). In 2013, the employment ratio for women was 43%, as compared with 58% for men (GUS 2014). This happened even though women on average are better educated than men in Poland (Regulska 1998).

Similarly, while average income was £790 gross, the most common net wage in Poland (mode) was £305 per month; half of the working population was earning less than £405 net (median) (GUS 2016). As Tycner argues (2016), some jobs, in cleaning or security for instance, are paid on average less than the minimum wage (£220 net). These data point to enormous income discrepancies between different parts of Polish society. Consequently, the Gini index for Poland was 0.3 in 2013 and has risen from 0.24 in 1985 (GINI 2013).⁴³ The neoliberal policies implemented by all post-1989 governments have led to a significant rise in the number of Poles living below the

⁴¹ In the early stage of transformation unemployment sky-rocketed from 0.3% in January 1990 to 12% by December 1991, reaching 16% in 1994 (GUS 2016). Available at: <http://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/rynek-pracy/bezrobocie-rejestrowane/stopa-bezrobocia-w-latach-1990-2016,4,1.html> (accessed November 2016).

⁴² Available at: <http://stat.gov.pl/sygnalne/komunikaty-i-obwieszczenia/lista-komunikatow-i-obwieszczen/obwieszczenie-w-sprawie-przecietnego-miesiecznego-wynagrodzenia-w-sektorze-przedsiębiorstw-w-2015-roku,60,3.html> (accessed November 2016).

⁴³ The Gini coefficient (or the Gini index) is a measure of income distribution of a nation's residents and is the most commonly used measure of inequality. The closer the numerical value to 0, the more equality.

‘social minimum’ (defined as a living standard of £163 per person in a one-person household and £405 for a three-person family per month in 2008), rising from 15% of the population in 1989 to 47% in 1996 and 59% in 2003 (Wielgosz 2005).⁴⁴ While absolute poverty declined from 13% in 1993 to 4% in 2010 (GINI 2013), the number of Poles living on the border of relative poverty was 17% in 2008 (Dębski 2010). Przemysław Wielgosz, a Polish left-wing commentator and journal editor (2005: 5-6), has called this ‘the absolute sorrow of restoration’, meaning that the restitution of neoliberal capitalism in Poland has produced a ‘social wasteland’.

Due to the abandonment of consistent state activity in the field of housing and other external factors, in 2002, 35% of Poles lived in poor or very poor housing conditions (Dębski 2010). According to the National Census of 2002, 70% of people aged 18-29 lived with their parents (GUS 2003). Also the idea that the labour market is virtuous because unemployment is lower than in other parts of Europe is misleading. The labour market was liberalized according to 1980s neoliberal principles in order to allow for more ‘flexibility’ (Regulska 1998). Thus, minimum wage regulations apply only to permanent employment contracts. Due to the ‘elasticization’ of the job market, permanent contracts have been increasingly replaced by insecure fixed-term – so-called ‘trash’ or ‘junk’ – contracts, which now concern 27% of the working population. Permanent contracts were also replaced by forced self-employment (19%), as employers prefer not to pay contributions for health care and pensions, thereby pushing their employees to do it themselves (Tycner 2016). Not having a permanent employment contract usually means not being eligible for a pension scheme, having no right to sick leave, holidays, to unemployment benefits, no right to join trade unions, and no childcare leave (Tycner 2016). Women make up an increasing number among the self-employed (Dębski 2010).

As I discussed in the section on Polish peripheral postcolonial position in chapter 2, Poland’s position in the international division of labour also has bearing on the situation on the job market. In the early 1990s, according to the tenets of the ‘shock

⁴⁴ The ‘social minimum’ is calculated by the Polish Institute of Labour and Social Studies (IPISS) and indicates a particular threshold needed for a household to lead a ‘decent’ life and is based on the cost of a basket of goods considered necessary for this (Dębski 2010: 70).

doctrine' (Klein 2007), the Polish industry and finance sectors were privatized and sold to transnational capital investors. In *Privatizing Poland*, Elizabeth Dunn (2004) has depicted the methods of privatization, arguing that new managerial standards and the reorganization of work changed worker identity by creating hierarchies and categorizing them into either bad ('communist') or 'normal' (capitalist) groups. Dunn (2004) shows that the narrative of being 'elastic' and 'individualistic' created the image of the capitalist man and the *other* – the former public worker (*homo sovieticus*). Those, who did not manage to 'keep up' the change, were left behind. In view of the feminist political economy literature discussed in chapter 2, these are also general effects of globalization that can be seen especially in the countries of the Global South, but also in Western Europe.

Furthermore, multinational corporations had usually no material interest in sustaining their newly purchased enterprises, with the alternative being either a profitable liquidation of a factory or its transformation into a subcontracting entity, hiring cheap workers (Tycner 2016; cf. Dunn 2004; Ost 2005). Pietrzak (2015), Bobako (2011), Sowa (2011, 2015) and Tycner (2016) see this as the start of what became a specialization within the global capital system. Given its (semi-)peripheral position in this system, Poland can compete internationally mainly with cheap labour. To stay competitive, labour has to be relatively cheaper in comparison to Western Europe, whose capital profits from Polish call-centres, storehouses, and factories producing simple subcomponents (Tycner 2016). These phenomena left behind many groups of people and barred them from benefiting from the economic success that the macroeconomic data suggest.

Jan Sowa shows (2015:85) that it is difficult to ask what the general consequences of such transformation were for Poland because they were diametrically different for different groups of Poles. The problem with the Polish transformation after 1989 is not what the cost was (too high, not fair), but who paid for it (Sowa 2015: 85). Essentially transformation was paid for not by those who mostly benefited from it. Andrzej Leder (2014:195) argues that the liberal rhetoric of the 1990s divested huge groups of people (especially workers and farmers) of a form of 'symbolic capital', acquired during state socialism, and put them in the position of losers – as 'Soviet people' or the mythical

homo sovieticus (see also Dunn 2004; Charkiewicz 2011). Following the theoretical analysis of chapter 2, we see how social groups that failed to ‘modernize’ or apply the new neoliberal orthodoxy during transformation were stigmatized and excluded from participating in the successes of the regime change.

Post-1989 politics in Poland

In terms of political developments, much has been said of the post-PRL party divides that defined transformation politics as continuity of the prior conflict between ‘we’ – the people and ‘they’ – the regime (Grabowska 2004). Individual preferences were bound with pro- or anti-regime attitudes and, while there was a significant middle group that did not fit into or care about the ‘we’ or ‘they’, it is argued that the political world consisted primarily of the dichotomy between regime and society (Bielasiak 2010: 43). Participating in politics meant having to choose a side in the dichotomy. This clash was infused with normative visions along a cultural axis of competition, rather than along the standard left–right continuum representing diverse socioeconomic interests (Bielasiak 2010). With the fall of PRL, the division remained in the form of the ‘post-communists’ and the ‘post-oppositionists’ (post-Solidarity).

Hence, the framing of Polish politics over the two decades following 1989 was subject to these twin pulls of political interests. The ‘post-communists’ and the post-Solidarity competition reinforced a discourse rooted in normative visions rather than distributive interests and policies (Bielasiak 2010: 42) – politics was not so much about achieving practical gains for particular societal groups of interests, but about ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ (or even ‘evil’). Instead of being grounded in constituencies with clear social and economic interests, politics became rooted in claims centred on moral judgments and unquestioned commitments to alternative worldviews. Bielasiak (2010) claims that in the post-PRL political divide, the debate centred foremost around issues of responsibility for past misdeeds and the nature of the free state (for instance on the responsibility for ‘communist regime crimes’ or ‘de-communization’ of the state apparatus).

Initially, the Polish political scene in the 1990s was characterized by volatility and instability in terms of party composition, membership, and electoral results (Gwiazda

2016). However, in spite of the party name and affiliation changes, as Polish analysts point out, politics has always been played out in Poland between two camps, called in different ways depending on the scholar: on the one hand, republican/ conservative/ nationalist-catholic/ jagiellonian⁴⁵/ ‘return to Europe’ and on the other liberal/ modernist/ ‘return to normal’/ pro-Western.⁴⁶ Literature described and conceptualized these blocs in the recent years, but named them variously, depending on whether the parties drew their origins from the Solidarity movement or from the former PZPR (United Polish Workers’ Party): in other words, depending on whether they were part of the state socialist regime or opposition prior to 1989. Arguably, from a postcolonial perspective, these two camps can be seen as an example of Kiossev’s (1999) and Sowa’s (2011) dichotomy between the essentialists and those that oppose the self-colonizing elites that I discussed in chapter 2.

The first camp nostalgically looks back to (invented or mythical) history and tries to restore some imagined ‘traditional’ (in their own understanding), national, and catholic community. Its main claim is to defend a supposed national community, maintaining that the Polish nation is homogenous and at the same time defining those who have or do not have the moral right to participate in the national group (Bielasiak 2010). The combination of all these factors facilitated a discourse infused with normative values as the primary currency of politics and the dominance of identity conflicts (in Polish politics) (Bielasiak 2010: 43). The dominant conservative paradigm of the ‘return to Europe’ acquired highly legitimizing value because it was a break with the state socialist past and an entry into the Western world as an independent and self-asserting actor (Grzymala-Busse and Innes 2003: 64-68). It stood as an affirmation of Poland’s long-term struggle to emerge from the shadow of the Soviet Union, which had derailed

⁴⁵ Referring to the Jagiellons – a dynastic monarchy of Lithuanian noble descent that ruled the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth (the First Polish Republic) in 1386-1596, encompassing what is often commonly known as ‘the Golden Age’.

⁴⁶ The difference between the ‘return to Europe’ and what is called the pro-Western and groups lies in the different visions they have of Polish integration with the ‘liberal West’. The former wants a Europe of sovereign nation states cooperating on what is in their individual national interests (‘concert of nations’). The latter are the ‘modernizers’ who want Poland to ‘catch up’ with the West and adopt practices from the West. For more detail see the discussions in chapter 2.

the country's European identity (I discussed the notions of 'return to Europe' and 'kidnapped West' in chapter 2).

Moreover, the Polish nation was viewed as a major contributor to the historical and cultural formation of the continent, especially in how it sacrificed throughout history for Europe's survival (Bielasiak 2010: 47). This does not necessarily entail a pro-European stance (understood as pro-European community), rather it invokes a particular self-reasserted 'equal footing' within a concert of European states (very much along 19th century ideas of national sovereignty). Significantly, it also means that, if Europe is seen as trampling on the expected 'equal footing', it may start to be seen as another totalizing, imposing and demanding 'evil empire', leading to slogans such as 'EU=Soviet Union' (Leder 2014; Sowa 2011).

The second, liberal and 'modernist', camp legitimizes its actions based on the calls for the 'return to normality' (discussed conceptually in chapter 2), which is simply identified with the wealth of Western societies, without a deeper insight into the divergences and sources of wealth there. In the drive to build market economy and establish 'normal' politics, the post-1989 program evolved into appeals based on common purpose and the good of the state, thereby reinforcing political tendencies based on consensual understandings of politics (Bielasiak 2010:47). 'Normality' here meant 'modern' or simply 'as it is in the West', which highlights the prominence and importance of postcolonial mentality (see chapter 2 for more details).

The result was the so-called 'cargo modernization' (Leder 2014), which meant the reproduction of costly institutional, but mainly infrastructural and material solutions from Western Europe, while telling people that there was no other way to reform (Gdula 2008:7; Sowa 2015: 21). The effects of 'normality' politics, apart from GDP growth, was the unquestioned rejection of the social welfare and public ownership of the 1990s. These self-colonizing elites proceeded to reject criticisms of their unreflective modernization, calling it an irrational facet of 'communist mentality' (Gdula 2008:8).

As I show in Table 4.4, following the accession to the EU, however, the post-PRL divide became less relevant and was displaced by a more visible post-Solidarity rivalry

(Bielasiak 2010:48). Both dominant parties in Polish politics after 2004, the Civic Platform (PO) and Law and Justice (PiS), claim direct descentance from the Solidarity movement. PiS' and PO's roots contributed to a reinvigorated 'war at the top'⁴⁷ that accentuated the diverging political understandings of what post-state socialist Poland should be. In the post-accession period, the emerging PO-PiS dichotomy altered the political cleavage that had defined the periods of late state socialism and most of the transformation, and drove the political contest away from the post-PRL divide (Grabowska, 2006: 179-180). As I summarize in Table 4.4, this happened simultaneously with the demise of the post-state socialist left (Alliance of Democratic Left or SLD). PiS defined its program as the embodiment of 'solidaristic Poland', dedicated to traditional norms affirming Solidarity's commitments to reclaim the nationalist values of Poland, in contrast to its depiction of 'liberal Poland' represented by PO's emphasis on individualism and competition (Słodkowska, and Dołbakowska 2006: 111-36, 155-200). To establish political ascendancy, both PO and PiS sought to define their heritage as representative of Solidarity's legacy to restore a free and just state (and also to legitimize themselves vis-à-vis the public).

For advocates of the PiS side, Poland's emergence from state socialist rule signified the restoration of the historical nation defined by national and Christian traditions. Therefore, they can be considered part of the 'return to Europe' tradition from an ultraconservative and 'Europe of nations' perspective. The narrative of moral resurrection was infused by historical traditions, Christian morality, and the stress on state sovereignty that draws extensively on the political mythology of nationalism and religion, Solidarity's struggle for the liberation of the country, and the commitment to social solidarity (Markowski 2007). In its depiction of a reclaimed Poland, the solidaristic PiS programme employed a normative terminology relying on confessional culture, economic populism favouring state intervention to remedy inequalities, and a

⁴⁷ 'War at the top' was originally the popular name given in the media to the conflict between the then president Lech Walesa and the other leaders of the Solidarity movement in the 1990s (especially the government of prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki).

revived Euroscepticism to safeguard economic and cultural independence (Bielasiak 2010: 50).

For proponents of the neoliberal ideology and liberal values, who coalesced in the PO camp, the struggle for freedom was about market principles, open competition, individual rights, and European integration, understood as pooled or diffused sovereignty (Bielasiak 2010: 49). These respective visions of a renewed Poland based their claims on distinct interpretations of Solidarity's legacy and national recovery, each using discursive appeals to particular interests of socioeconomic groups in post-1989 Poland (Jasiewicz 2008: 12-15). While the PO side of the post-Solidarity divide appealed largely to Polish urban, middle-class, educated people; PiS posited the concerns of religious, lower-income, rural, and small town Poles. Hence, politics in the new millennium continued to be defined by a dichotomy, by contrasting visions of the country, and the persistence of a maximalist discourse advocated by '*Polska Solidarna*' (solidaristic Poland) and reluctantly forced upon '*Polska Liberalna*' (liberal Poland) (Bielasiak 2010:55).

Table 4.4 presents a summary of the main political events and trends in Poland after 1989 in order to contextualize the discussions below. The aim is to show the sequencing of the political changes and reforms.

Table 4.4 An approximate periodization of Polish politics.

Period	Selected political features	Political elites' attitudes towards the EU
EARLY 1990s	- 'shock therapy' - early 'de-communization'	- application for EU candidacy (1990)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'war at the top' - restrictive abortion law (1993) - wholesale privatization - volatile political party system - Wałęsa presidency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'return to Europe' attitude
LATE 1990s (AFTER 1997 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - post-PRL party divide: between 'post-communists' (SLD and affiliates under different names) and post-Solidarity camp (AWS and other short-lived Solidarity offshoots) - 'three big reforms' (health care, education, pensions system liberalized) - Kwaśniewski presidency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - official EU accession negotiations (from 1999) - mainstream politics is pro-European
PRE-ACCESSION (EARLY 2000s UNTIL CA. 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU accession referendum (2003) - EU accession (2004) - last time 'post-communists' in government (SLD) - first knee-jerk nationalist and conservative reactions to accession - end of post-PRL party divide (SLD in power for the last time) - establishment of PO and PiS - PiS wins parliamentary and presidential elections (Fall 2005) - end of transformation(?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - government-led Euro-enthusiasm - SLD-led government officially urging people to vote 'yes' in the accession referendum - initial waves of anti-EU sentiments (right-wing)
POST-ACCESSION (2005-CURRENT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - post-Solidarity party divide: between PO and PiS - irrelevance of left-wing political forces - strong conservative resurgence - short period of centrist-liberal heyday (2008-2011) during the (centre-) right PO governments (2007-2015) - Smolensk plane crash and the beginning of the 'Smolensk religion' - presidencies of Kaczyński (2005-2010) and Komorowski (2010-2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seeming divide between Eurosceptic PiS and pro-European PO - Eurosceptics in power 2005-2007 - pro-European PO in government 2007-2015 - Polish rotating Presidency in the Council of Ministers of the EU (July-December 2011)

(Source: own compilation).

What comes across from the timeline presented in Table 4.4 are the non-linear and contingent trends in Polish politics. In fact, the transformation and Europeanization processes did not follow linear sequences. The changes were a contingent ebb and flow determined by the electoral majorities in parliament. Moreover, I identify the brief period between 2008 and 2011, as the 'liberal heyday' in Poland, due to the dominant

mood of the time. It seemed that the liberal, ‘modernist’ camp triumphed in politics (at least that is what the perspective was from Warsaw). PO had won over PiS in the early elections of 2007; macroeconomic data were looking good despite the crisis in Europe; Poland held the rotating Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the EU in 2011 (which was presented as very prestigious domestically); and the country embarked on a bout of major infrastructure investments mainly in roads and stadiums, in preparation to host the European football championship of 2012 (which had significant bearing on the social and political outlook in Poland).

After the period of stalemate and rolling back in terms of equality and anti-discrimination policy in the fifth parliamentary term (2005-2007), due to a strongly right-dominated parliament, after 2007, there was some progress in the area. A new round of implementation of EU equality and anti-discrimination laws (legislated in 2010, entered into force 2011), established formally the office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and defined its objectives and institutional scope (discussion in the following sections). Similarly, the electoral quota bill was successfully passed in parliament in 2011.⁴⁸ However, these were one-sided successes that did not ‘trickle down’ to the majority of the population or address the inherent inequality legacies of transformation; they concerned mainly political and economic elites and in reality, by October 2015, the electoral pendulum shifted strongly to the right again.

The explanation for this can be found in earlier research. David Ost (2005) has shown in his research of trade union members that the anger resulting from the socio-economic and political marginalization of the transformation ‘losers’ was mobilized along non-economic lines, which ultimately impeded the development of the emerging democratic system. Those who could politically capture the emotional baggage of

⁴⁸ The amendment to the electoral code stipulated candidate quotas on party lists, requiring every district-level list prepared by a party to include at least 35 per cent of candidates of each gender. The advocates of the quota law did not manage to lobby for a ‘zipper’ arrangement that would require lists to be topped by women and men in turns. The quota also applied only to the lower chamber and not the Senate.

transformation and organize it along ethnic, religious, rational, national, or religious ones (instead of class lines), scored great successes politically (Ost 2005: 8-10).

During the period under investigation in the thesis (2011-2015), politicians from the so-called neoliberal camp, like the prime minister, Donald Tusk, and the president, Bronisław Komorowski, repeatedly stated that today's Poles lived in the 'best Poland ever' (see the quotes by Komorowski in chapter 1 as an example). This did not coincide with the lived experience of social and political inequality of many Poles (as seen in the discussion above). Arguably, the church and the ultraconservative and reactionary right gave people a different interpretation of contemporary society, providing the losers with a narrative of restoring dignity through nationalism and religious *ressentiment*.

The role of the catholic church in Poland

One of the main actors in Polish politics since the 1980s has been the catholic church. Its role in the transformation was significant. For this reason, the next section focuses on the role of the church in Poland. The basis for the catholic church's claim on Polish politics and society is rooted in the assumption that 'everyone is catholic'. Due to historic circumstances, Poland is an unusually homogenous European country in terms of ethnic and religious composition.⁴⁹ Officially, according to the data provided by the Main Statistical Office (GUS 2016) for the year 2011, 87% of Poles are roman catholic, 0.4% are Eastern orthodox and 0.3% protestant. At the same time, there are over 150 other official religious groups or faiths as registered with the state (GUS 2016). 2.4% of Poles declare themselves as non-denominational (GUS 2016). However, when measuring the participation in religious rites within the catholic group, 39% come to mass on Sundays (so-called *dominicanes*) and only 16% receive communion regularly, which is one of the tenets of catholic faith (*communicantes*)

⁴⁹ The Main Statistical Office published the data for the last official Polish census of 2011 (GUS 2012). Over 93% of Polish citizens declared themselves ethnically Polish (GUS 2012). The single largest ethnic minority was German – counting just over 100,000, in a country of 38 million (GUS 2012). Most ethnic minority groups did not exceed 50,000 members (Ukrainian, Belorussian) or 20,000 members (Roma, Russian) (GUS 2012).

(ISKK 2014).⁵⁰ Interestingly, according to opinions polls, 28% of Polish catholics believe in reincarnation (Graff 2010). At the same time, 71% of Poles are married and 74% of children are baptized in catholic church (Graff 2010). There seems to exist a certain discrepancy between declarations and self-identification as being religious and actual religious practice in Poland.

Polish catholic church is very influential in politics. As Michał Matlak (2016) argues, the respect for the Polish catholic church is linked to the role it played during state socialism, when organized religion provided a necessary alternative to the authoritarian state and gave many Poles a sense of freedom and dignity. Coming out of the state socialist years, the church had accumulated unparalleled social capital because it was widely seen as the focus of democratic opposition and the protector of the true (non-state socialist or ‘anti-communist’) national identity. Some degree of social secularization began spreading during the state socialist period, but the trend was halted and partially reversed with the papal election of John Paul II (Matlak 2016). In the 1980s (especially after Karol Wojtyła became pope in 1978), the church managed to posit itself as the locus of anti-regime opposition. By providing space both physically (literally allowing oppositionists to meet on church premises) and ideationally (giving legitimation to the ‘fight for freedom’ through catholicism), it became indispensable to the Solidarity movement – both its ‘left’ and conservative wings.

Arguably, the Polish catholic church leads the way in creating discursive conflicts by generating or even inventing enemy groups (Sowa 2015: 12). The church is now spending the accumulated social and political capital from state socialist times, when it was the bulwark of opposition, in pursuit of a string of threats: in the 1990s it was sects, leftist secularism, and Western decadence, today it is ‘genderism’ (as I further discuss in chapter 7). Overall, throughout the last decades the church has managed to

⁵⁰ The data is provided according to the Institute of Catholic Church Statistics (ISKK), available at: http://www.iskk.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=38&Itemid=67 (accessed November 2016).

position itself as a besieged fortress, which is allegedly always running the risk of being destroyed.

Generally, Alice Kang (2015: 9-10) points out that church-state relations may be separate and antagonistic (characterized by assertive or extreme secularism) or fused. In political contexts where church and state are assertively separated, religious authorities have less say over policymaking. At the other end of the spectrum, church-state relations may be fused, where church and state are closely intertwined and religious authorities have greater powers over policymaking. While she gives Iran as an example of the latter, I argue that Poland also provides an instance of tending towards such fusion. While officially there is a separation of church and state, and religious authorities do not have explicitly complete control over policymaking, they are seen as legitimate players on the political field and their input on policy proposals is sought and respected. Due to the politicians' partial reliance on the church, religious authorities (including conservative religious activists) become informal veto players (Kang 2015: 11). Furthermore, once formalized, partial power-sharing arrangements between state and church become institutions in and of themselves, having long-lasting effects on how citizens and the state conceive what is thinkable and unthinkable (Kang 2015: 11).

Following this logic, in the 1990s the Polish catholic church proceeded to translating its informal capital into real political and financial power. In 1997, religious groups and their conservative deputies rallied around the cause of including an '*invocatio Dei*' clause in the newly drafted post-1989 constitution. Their efforts failed, but the precedent of forcing through and demanding legislation according to the 'right values' was established (for more, see chapter 5). As a result, the Polish constitution does not state explicitly that Poland is a secular state. Following long negotiations, the parties drafting the constitution agreed on a half-way formula in the preamble stating:

We, the Polish Nation - all citizens of the Republic, Both those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty, As well as those not sharing such faith but respecting those universal values as arising from other sources, (...) Beholden to our ancestors for their labours, their struggle for independence achieved at great sacrifice, for our culture rooted in the Christian heritage of the Nation and in universal human values, (...) Recognizing our responsibility before God or our own consciences.

This devising tries to give some place for non-believers or secular actors, but it also unequivocally gives precedence and stresses the role of religion in Polish political and social life. Furthermore, Article 53 §1 reads: 'Freedom of conscience and religion shall be ensured to everyone.' Similarly, Article 53 §6 states that: 'No one shall be compelled to participate or not participate in religious practices.' These were the only articles that non-religious negotiators managed to push through in the draft of the constitution.

Kinga Dunin (2002) and Agnieszka Graff (2008a) argue that the catholic church in Poland has monopoly in the axiology sphere to define the collective consciousness of Poles. The borders between church and state have been actively blurred in Poland for years (Graff 2008a). Therefore, the statement that 'Poland is a catholic country' is heard everywhere (Graff 2010). Judging from the official statistics I presented above, it is more a self-fulfilling prophecy, a speech-act legitimizing the already existing power relation (Graff 2010). For instance, Graff argued (2001) that the church dictates the conditions and defines the language in the area of reproductive and sexual health.

The readiness of society and politicians to apply and adopt this language reproduces and reinforces the supremacy of the church. Having established their power in the basic law of the country, the catholic clergy consistently and persistently protested against any progressive proposals concerning assisted reproductive techniques (*in vitro* fertilization in particular), abortion and contraception, civil unions (especially same-sex, but not only), and sexual/reproductive health education at schools by claiming they are at odds with nature. The legislation implemented in Poland since 1989 has followed the recommendations of the catholic church. Because politicians in Poland largely are subservient to the church and fear its societal influence, all of the above activities are either banned or heavily restricted by the law or, as in the case of compulsory sex education, ignored by the authorities.

Through the work of the so-called Church Committee with the approval of the state apparatus, the church managed to conduct a large-scale reprivatisation campaign with the approval of subsequent governments. The name Church Committee is used commonly to refer to one of the five 'Estate Committees' (the catholic one), which were established in 1989, in order to consider cases of return and/or compensation of

requisitioned or nationalized properties of religious organizations and institutional churches, which were taken over by the state under the PRL.⁵¹

Furthermore, the church lobbied for and established religious education as a required subject in all schools.⁵² The other power gains of the church during the transformation came in the form of state budget funding (from multiple ministries: health, education, defence, etc.) and indirectly through the access of catholic religious actors to hospitals, schools, and public events and institutions. Numerous legal solutions and provisions have been presented to the Polish public either as compromise or as the ‘will of the conservative majority’. In practice, they have been a direct result of powerful lobbying by the Polish catholic church in politics. For instance, in 1993, the right-wing government of Hanna Suchocka signed the Concordat agreement with the Vatican, which put the burden of funding of religious education in schools on the Ministry of Education, without having any oversight into the curriculum (which remains with the dioceses).

Similarly, the ‘left’ SLD government of Leszek Miller signed the EU accession treaty in 2003, only with the added proviso about the legal supremacy of the Polish legislation over EU law in matters of ‘protection of life and moral issues’ (even though the EU has no competence in this field). Graff (2008a) and Środa (2009) argued that this was the capstone of a tacit agreement between subsequent governments and the Polish episcopate, making sure that the interests of the church were maintained in exchange for the hierarchs’ support. In response, Polish feminists and activists wrote the *Letter of 100 women* addressed to the European Parliament stating:

There has been a peculiar agreement between the catholic church and the government regarding Polish accession to the EU (...) The church will support European integration in exchange for the government giving up the debate on

⁵¹ The Estate Committee for the catholic church was terminated in 2011 amid accusations of rampant fraud and mismanagement in favour of the church and at a huge cost to the state.

⁵² Legally schools are bound to provide an alternative subject of ‘Ethics’. The Council of Europe has recently issued warnings that Poland does not respect religious freedom in education and that everyone is presumed catholic by default, therefore students who wish to ‘opt out’ from religious education classes are singled out at school and left without occupation in the periods when their classmates have religious education classes.

the liberalization of the abortion law (...) In the backrooms of to Polish EU integration process, women's rights are being traded off (List 100 kobiet).⁵³

Feminists and transformation

Pre-accession gendered analyses of the democratic transformations that followed the fall of state socialism agree that the democratization processes led to a re-assertion of patriarchy and a return to essentialist notions of gender differences.⁵⁴ Consequently, scholars have argued that women are the biggest 'losers' of the transformation processes (Eisenstein 1993; Funk 1993; Bridger 1999; Bystydziński 1999; Heinan 1999; Zvinkliene 1999; Duffy 2000; LaFont 2001; Regulska et al. 2006). Some of the reasons for this could be the negligible role of women in power positions, their marginal economic and financial capabilities as well as the prevailing older patriarchal gender regime (pre-dating state socialism in the region) that the workers' party rule did nothing to dispel (Duffy 2000).

Ironically, also the protective legislation, inherited from the state socialist period, which gave women benefits because of their reproductive roles, proved to be a disadvantage for women in the market economy (LaFont 2001: 210). For instance, maternity leave and public childcare were deemed too expensive for the market economy and women turned out to be the most expendable workers during transformation. The data presented in the beginning of the chapter point to the fact that women were pushed out of the workforce, but it was also the perception of many women (Penn 2014). Hence, in order to accommodate the massive unemployment of the male workforce that came as a result of privatization and 'optimization' of state enterprises, for women the 'return to tradition' meant primarily staying at home and in the private sphere. This perspective did not change much until, already in the post-accession period, politicians started noticing the plummeting birth rates (more discussion in chapter 5). As I show in chapter 5, this spurred them on to fight the 'demographic crisis' with renewed attentions to certain aspects of welfare.

⁵³ Available at: http://www.zgapa.pl/zgapedia/List_Stu_Kobiet.html (accessed November 2016).

⁵⁴ According to gender essentialism, women and men are biologically different, consequently their inherent and inadvertent (gender) roles in society have to be different too.

According to the conservative and nationalist understandings that dominated the transformation period and gained increased prominence across the political spectrum since then, under state socialism men were ‘effeminate’ and emasculated due to their lack of political participation and their perceived political debilitation (Verdery 1994). Meanwhile, women were relatively ‘better off’ (than before state socialism at the least), because of their perceived gains in terms of employment, protective legislation, and the right to abortion (Graff 2008a). What is more, state socialism was seen as having an almost parental (even motherly) role that usurped the authority, which under patriarchy proper, and traditionally, should have been men’s (Verdery 1996). Following this logic, male emancipation and empowerment could only come through the negation of the previous state socialist order. Therefore, the transformation to democracy ‘established itself in collective consciousness as the re-masculinization of national culture, allegedly feminized by state socialism.’ (Graff 2008b: 201) So, if women were seen to have benefited in any way from state socialism, feminism was automatically associated with state socialism and therefore was attacked as anti-national.

Women’s perceived better position is essential for understanding why feminism was rejected wholesale in transformation. Post-1989 politics were constantly legitimated through their supposed break with and contrast to state socialism (Verdery 1994; Duffy 2000). Moreover, this gendered analysis asserts that the ‘reassertion of control over women’s bodies and returning women to the home signifies men’s regaining control over what is theirs, a re-appropriation of (male) collective identity and a symbol of having wrestled control away from a dead state socialism’ (Funk 1993: 2). The reinstated power of the church further added to the reinstatement and reinforcement of patriarchy in post-state socialist transformations. For instance, the issue of restricting abortion, a theme particularly important for the church, came into legislative debates very early in the 1990s in almost all Eastern European countries.

Once freedom was ‘regained’ after 1989, men could go back to the ‘rightful’ place and govern in the public sphere. As I mentioned above, this was even more pronounced as it proved a convenient strategy to alleviate some of the unemployment produced by the market reforms by pushing women out of the labour force, leaving their jobs to

men (Eisenstein 1993; Funk 1993; LaFont 2001). With the ever-increasing prominence of essentialist notions of gender roles in post-socialist times, Eastern European women have largely displayed a 'non-gendered' identity outside of the private sphere (Duffy 2000; Beckwith 2007). For instance, according to the research by Shana Penn (1994, 2006, 2014) on women in the Solidarity movement, women did not self-identify as female politicians or activists fighting for *women's freedom*, but as people fighting for *everyone's freedom*. What is more, women did not feel discriminated against, because they believed in the inherent biological differences between the sexes and the 'natural' consequences thereof in social life (Penn 2014). Due to the economic hardships of the 'democratic' transformation period, spurred by neoliberal and market reforms, pressure mounted on women to give up individual aspirations and personal goals and to follow the norms and goals delineated by the dominant political group (the new ruling elite) (Graff 2008a).

This took the form of a renewed demand for family stability as a basis for a healthy society and appeals for a return to traditional roles for women. People were pressured into conforming to rules that were geared toward a particular (nationalistic) and masculinist collective identity, at the expense of the individual (Papanek 1994). Women's identities had to conform to the alleged 'greater needs' of society, nation and state at the time of transformation. Marginalized groups such as women did not necessarily feel discriminated against, because they believed in the inherent biological differences and the natural consequences thereof in social life (LaFont 2001; Regulska et al. 2006).

As I have observed earlier, the first wave of transnational literature on gender and state socialism focused on the need to account for the 'lack' of feminism in the countries that underwent transformations. This teleological understanding of transformation mirrored the dominant thinking in political science at the time, which generally viewed that the countries of Eastern Europe as transitioning from a specific starting point which was bad (state socialism) to some version of a market democracy as its desirable final goal. Significantly, Peggy Watson points out that this teleology stemmed from an unconscious normative assumption that feminism should have appeared and that it was prevented from doing so by some shared experience in state socialism (Watson 2000b:

106). Following Watson, democracy after state socialism should not be conceptualized as a removal, but as a reconfiguration of asymmetries of power, underlining the way in which identities are differently constructed after transformation (Watson 2000b: 103). According to her, 'the novelty of masculinism after communism is that it is part of a broader process of sweeping political differentiation, the result of unparalleled opportunity for relative political empowerment which democratization after communism brings' (Watson 2000b: 111-2).

Theorists focusing on gender analyses of Eastern Europe reiterate that citizens (both women and men) under state socialism were equally excluded from political power and participation (Watson 1997).⁵⁵ The state had exclusive monopoly on the shaping of the public sphere. Arguably, everyone had the same rights in abstract terms, which in reality were curtailed in equal measure also for everyone. However, as Watson argues, with the democratization process, gender began to matter more as a societal (and status) difference that could be mobilized for political purposes. Theoretically, with the democratic transformation everyone gained the right of expression and the right to private property (among others). However, because democratization was introduced as tied inextricably with neoliberal market reforms, not everyone was able to exercise these rights to the same extent. The realization of the rights depended on people's ability to exercise them relative to others. Citizens who were more economically or politically disadvantaged at the start of the transformation process (like women), ended up as its losers as well.

What is more, in the 'maelstrom of change' all post-state socialist Eastern European states went through extensive national debates on 'who should be included' in terms of belonging to the new nation (Duffy 2000: 227). Therefore, how and on what basis individuals were differentially included into society as full citizens mattered. Differences became politically mobilized, women were turned into a 'political minority' and the new collective was defined by 'democracies compromised of male interests' (Graham and Regulska 2006: 123). Given the insights of the more recent

⁵⁵ Here I am referring to the entirety of the population and not the top workers' party leaders who wielded the power.

gendered research into the opposition prior and after 1989, it can be argued that the exclusion of women after the fall of PRL reflected the forgotten and ignored role of women in the Solidarity movement (cf. Penn 2014). Hence, as Duffy argues (2000: 225), women underwent a ‘reverse transition’ – instead of gaining more equality under democracy, many of their actual rights were curtailed (like reproductive health or institutionalized care) along with the substantive opportunities to exercise rights because of the low representation of women in positions of power. The needs and desires of individual people and especially women were subordinated to the good of motherland (Gal and Kligman 2000).

This logic was applied through the work of a religious discourse which intertwined with nationalistic sentiments and produced a powerful tool for disciplining the public. Such ‘displaced nationalism’ (Graff 2009) provides a narrative of the imaginary collective, which envisions the possibility of re-establishing the ‘natural’ order of things not only in terms of gender roles, but also reproductive arrangements, and family configurations. Since the collective is imagined as a homogenous nation rather than a pluralist society, the citizens are easily denied their rights, not only in the field of reproduction, but also in terms of democratic deliberation over moral choices (Korolczuk 2013b) – and also in terms of how they view the very process of transformation and how they justify the choices made about female and male roles. This process also had a reflexive dimension in that it streamlined views of transformation itself, thereby presenting the political choices that were made as the only option.

Post-transformation gender relations

The post-1989 Polish state has become a state of and for the masculine universal subject. As mentioned earlier, Shana Penn (1994: 63) has demonstrated that women who organized the underground Solidarity movement after the imposition of martial law in December 1981 (when most male members were imprisoned or interned) have never been publicly recognized as contributing to the resistance against state socialism. Similarly, Peggy Watson has argued that, parallel to the increasing power of the parliament, the number of women deputies decreased (Watson 1993b; Fuszara 2009;

2010). Einhorn (1993) has shown how the institutional agreement reached by the Round Table negotiations in the spring of 1989 excluded women and ignored their interests. Alexandra Gerber (2010) outlined how the nationalist discourses effectively impeded the realization of legislation that guarantees equality between women and men in Poland. Accordingly, one of the most prominent Polish feminist scholars in the field of politics, Małgorzata Fuszara (2009) depicts the absence of women from high-ranking public positions both in politics and the financial sector and administration. This picture is further elaborated and problematized by the analysis of the media situation (Graff 2008a) and the studies of national identity and culture (Matynia 1994; Janion 1996).

Most feminist theorists analyse the gender relations in Eastern Europe from a ‘macro’ perspective. They trace the gender structures under state socialism by analysing how and why gender was not the central point of analysis of the dominance and struggle in state socialism (and Marxism) (Meyer 1985; Eisenstein 1993). They also stress the significance of the basic assumption that equality in terms of full employment was supposed to have meant gender equality in society. However, in truth, full employment meant state-enforced duty, not a privilege or a responsibility. For women, this added to the so-called ‘double’ or ‘triple burden’ (Meyer 1985; Duffy 2000; LaFont 2001) consisting of a professional job and household work combined with the task of raising children and expected political and social involvement. What is more, while state socialism allowed women to enter into traditionally male occupations (though to a certain level only), it did not ensure the dynamic in the opposite direction – men were not encouraged to perform traditionally female household chores or childcare (Duffy 2000; LaFont 2001). Despite near full participation of women in the workforce, their roles remained largely clerical and secretarial in the domains where men were in managerial positions. Moreover, a significant wage gap persisted. For many Eastern European women such ‘false equality’ and ‘forced emancipation’ were reasons for resentment, not appreciation (Funk 1993; LaFont 2001; Fuszara and Zielińska 2006). Women’s full participation in the workforce became so associated with state socialism that its negation was framed as an ‘anti-communist’ and oppositionist stance.

The fall of state socialism led to a redrawing of the lines between the public and private spheres. In the traditionally patriarchal dichotomy, the private sphere, as symbolized by home, family and friends is considered the female domain, whereas the public sphere of paid work, public office, politics and economic activity is seen as male. The public sphere has always been considered as having more importance and value than the private sphere (productive-reproductive divide); it was where men did the politics and the business. While the public-private division in society held in state socialist times, the value and appreciation of the two spheres was somewhat different. Under state socialism both women and men 'retreated to the private sphere' (Duffy 2000: 221; Graff 2008b) to escape the overpowering state interference in all aspects of public life, because the 'state [...] had either lost its credibility (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary) and/or was eroding in moral authority (USSR).' (Duffy 2000: 221)

Therefore, the public sphere was seen as the source of moral decay of the society. Both women and men were powerless there. This meant that the private sphere (always dominated by women) was the place where core national and moral values were preserved and culture was transmitted, frequently in purposeful opposition to the state. In fact, homes often became the centres of anti-regime activities (like printing of underground newspapers, pamphlets, political meetings, etc.) (cf. Penn (2006). 'Thus, the conceptualization of the locus of society control was 'turned on its head,' at least from the western women's perspective.' (Duffy 2000: 221; Graff 2008b). Surprisingly, this did not lead to a re-valuation of the private in favour of appreciating 'women's work', as can be seen in the scathing sign on the walls of the Gdańsk shipyard during the famous August 1980 strike: 'Women, do not disturb us, we are fighting for Poland!' Men did the 'hard' work; women were supposed to make sandwiches. This clearly delineates the private sphere as designed for women around the *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* trope, leaving the public – political – sphere for men to reign in. In Poland, this particular vision of gender roles permeated the post-1989 political scene through Solidarity and the catholic church, which emerged as the major political players in the transformation. Once established in the 1990s, this understanding dominated the following stages of transformation and was never really challenged in the post-accession period.

Anti-feminist discourses

In the early 1990s, the word ‘feminist’ became an epithet and an insult used in Eastern Europe, referring to women who either did not fit into the heteronormative traditional family gender roles, or who were assertive about their rights, both in the public and private spheres. The negative perception of feminism, as a direct associate of ‘communism’, was perpetuated and spread through ultra-religious and right-wing political forces. Examples of this discourse range from the Polish bishop Tadeusz Pieronek, who called the then minister Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka ‘feminist concrete that even hydrochloric acid will not help’, to daily television use of the term ‘feminist’ as interchangeable with ‘witch’ or ‘monster’. Such discourses are not peculiar, endemic or even restricted to Poland, or Eastern Europe.

As I argue in Chapter 7, these discursive constructions of feminists connect with a wider global anti-feminist backlash, which follows certain historical trends, generally recurring when it seems that women have made substantial gains in their efforts to obtain equal rights. However, the anti-feminist discourses in Eastern Europe display significant interdiscursivity with homophobic, racist, xenophobic and often anti-Semitic discourses, which are more dominant in societies of the region. They all construct the ‘other’ (whether feminist, gay, foreigner or Jewish) as a pervasive and infectious threat to the healthy traditional – national – family. The proponents of such hegemonic discourses see the problem in the apparent fact that a lobby of ‘leftist/liberal/feminist forces’ is trying to dismantle or undermine the institution of the family by advocating for equality and tolerance. Such anti-feminist discourses have been increasingly constructing the ‘West’ and/or ‘Europe’ as a source of the decadent threat to what is national and natural, and therefore good, especially in the post-accession period.

Anti-feminist discourses were not merely a short-term feature of the transformation processes in Eastern Europe, but they laid the foundations for the current political situation. In many countries of the region, any legislation or proposal that is perceived as progressive in terms of women’s (and sexual minority) rights is easily ridiculed or dismissed as dangerous, thereby discarding or pushing women’s rights topics down

and off national parliamentary agendas. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 7, the Polish ‘war on gender’ over the last years is a direct descendant of the early 1990s anti-feminism. The current anti-gender discourses are church-driven, but are willingly followed by Polish politicians. The virulence of this discourse as well as the commitment with which it is being applied in politics require further investigation.

The dominant, even hegemonic, position of anti-feminism during the transformations in Eastern Europe has left us with a narrative that is seemingly gender-neutral and claims that, even if there were losers to the ‘democratic’ transformation processes, it was irrespective of their sex. As a consequence of the construction of women and their specific gender roles, the fact that neoliberal market reforms hit them most is often glossed over or missed in public debates, but also mainstream political analysis (see for instance: Eisenstein 1993; Fuszara 1993; LaFont 2001; Fuszara and Zielinska 2006). Women have not had the opportunity to write their story of the transformation in the mainstream and the feminists that have tried to give insights were ridiculed and discredited through the self-perpetuating anti-feminist discourse stemming from the post-1989 transformation (Graff 2008a).

The thesis intervenes in scholarly debates on the expectations, progression, features, and consequences of the political change that Poland underwent after the fall of state socialism in 1989. Over the years, Polish feminist scholars have stressed the need for a feminist critique of transformation that takes into account a gendered social and political analysis and shows the historical sources and subsequent modernizations of patriarchy (Fuszara 1993; Graff 2008a). They also called for an analysis of how gender power relations get inscribed in institutions. Elites in Poland and the EU seem to be largely blind to the problems of social exclusion and growing socio-economic inequalities (Charkiewicz 2006, 2010; Bobako 2011). This points to a multi-focal social crisis with very concrete gendered dimensions (Maciejewska and Marszalek 2013: 11).

Gender equality getting a ‘double beating’

In the years leading up to the EU accession (1997-2004, see Table 4.4), Poland implemented several family- and gender-related policies that attempted to

‘retraditionalize’ gender relations in the country (Gerber 2011; Glass and Fodor 2007; Pascall and Kwak 2005). These came mostly in the form of welfare and social protection cuts (access to free childcare, social benefits) and notably in the restriction of abortion. The Polish resistance to implementing the EU gender equality agenda and the actual non-enforcement of gender mainstreaming have often been attributed to the importance of the catholic church in social and political life (Anderson 2006; Heinen and Wator 2006). As I have shown in this chapter, the determinant role of religiosity and of the church in political and social life has been particularly pinpointed as the root cause of Polish social conservatism. However, as shown above, others have ascribed it to a backlash against PRL-era gender policy (Funk and Mueller 1993; Fuszara 2000).

The negative reactions to gender equality in Poland, in the form of ultraconservative backlash and ‘return to tradition’ in family life, not only sought to destroy the gender equality legacy as a facet of the state socialist regime, but were also a response to the EU promoting its own policy agenda through accession conditionality and normative power (Buzan and Little 2000; Manners 2002). As a scholar of European integration observed, the conditionality requirements of the Eastern enlargement were qualitatively different, and nominally more demanding, than the ones put forward in the previous EU expansions (Leiber 2007). It is important to note that gender equality provisions and gender mainstreaming policies were developed and formulated before states in Eastern Europe joined the EU. Poland did not participate in the creation of gender equality policies that it had to adopt. Furthermore, the Eastern European candidate countries were required to adopt and implement the *acquis communautaire* as a the definitive be-all and end-all condition of accession, without being able to negotiate the substance of these requirements (Gerber 2011). This again allowed for an interpretation and perception of another imposition of ‘foreign ideology’, as I discussed earlier.

Although some claim that the ‘anti-feminist ideological legacy’ of the post-PRL period is becoming less important, we need to look at institutional legacies to explain tendencies towards retraditionalization (Saxonberg and Szelewa 2007; Gerber 2011). The claim of institutional path dependency is a valid one and it does not automatically

rule out the importance of other more recent factors. The historical legacy itself has a complex relationship to state socialist ideology, having been both shaped by, and in reaction to, it. Furthermore, as Gerber argues (2011), this ideological backlash has not disappeared, but rather has been transformed or merged into opposition to the EU gender equality agenda. To a certain extent, several of the central tenets of PRL gender policy are identical to those of the EU gender equality agenda.

What had once been state socialist has arguably been re-signified or even restyled as European, so that this agenda became vulnerable to labelling by Polish policy elites as reminiscent of—if not identical to—the social engineering of the previous regime (Gerber 2011: 493). These apparent similarities between EU gender equality policy and state socialist policy are crucial: not only in that their shared designation of the privileged category of the ‘employed’ structures access to state support and protection, but also in their shared inability to alter either the valuation of care work in relation to paid labour, or the gendered division of labour within the household (Gerber 2011: 493-4). This provides another reason for the often-prominent discursive link EU=Soviet Union that nationalist-catholic and conservative political groups in Poland use.

So, as Elżbieta Korolczuk (2013b; Hryciuk and Korolczuk 2013) argued, women-specific and gender equality legislation always faces a double challenge in Poland. First, the issues must successfully gain a place on the political agenda at all, and then legislative proposals must win majority support in the parliament. While this is a normal process in other countries, in Poland the task is particularly difficult due to the pre-eminence of ultraconservative values in politics (more details in chapter 5,6, and 7). Thus, we can see a mechanism that produces and maintains gender-based exclusion. One essential feature of this construction is that women are denied the possibility of acquiring a political subject position. As Graff (2011: 52) states:

“Woman” is not one of the two categories that to an equal degree can be located under the concept of “person” or “citizen” – it is a distinct category which has connotations of private sphere, family, motherhood physiology and sexuality.

In view of the insights provided by the literature discussed in chapter 2, the assertion highlights that there are losers to national, economic, and political constructions and that they are gendered. Processes of transformation and Europeanization, as

implemented in Poland, entailed the societal and political redefinition of groups of people, women arguably being the most substantial one. While they were not devoid of citizenship, through the gendered construction of nationalism and economy, they became losers – distinct, separate, and inferior as a social group.

As I outlined in the initial part of this chapter, there is a wide agreement that Polish politics is divided into two deeply antagonistic blocs, the cooperation between which is difficult, if not impossible. Agnieszka Graff describes the blocks as liberal and religious (2007: 151); others characterize them as pragmatic-cynical and patriotic-conservative, or simply left-liberals and right-traditionalists (Krasnodębski 2003:40). Whatever the labels, commentators conclude that they stand too far apart to allow for any dialogue: '[t]here can be no real dialogue between a liberal discourse, which emphasizes freedom and human rights, and a religious discourse, the bottom line of which is the “will of God”, “absolute truth”, and “natural law” (Graff 2007: 151). The field of gender equality is where these two camps come to a head. Neither camp commits to issues or values of gender equality, with the distinction that one pays it lip service and the other overtly rejects it. Surveys of politicians’ opinions (both women and men) reveal that gender equality does not enjoy much support, even though discrimination against women is acknowledged (Fuszara 2010: 377). Indeed, there appears to be more support for gender parity among the electorate than among the politicians (Fuszara 2010: 378).

Hence, the denunciation of gender equality was double; first, with the rejection of state socialism in Eastern Europe; and second, in parallel with the resurgence of right-wing political preferences in an anti-EU function. On the one hand, discourses of gender equality and anti-discrimination legal provisions have been perceived negatively as a part of state socialist legacy. On the other, because of the visibility of gender equality as part of the package and standards to be adopted in order to achieve EU accession, it has subsequently gained negative connotations as anti-EU sentiments have grown.

An anti-equality example

The history of the post of the anti-discrimination ombudsperson in Poland is an illustrative example of the superficiality of implementation of the gender equality provisions. Prior to the EU accession process, the governments in the 1990s and early 2000s had various secretarial positions within ministries (either labour or social affairs) that were residual to the *Plenipotentiary for Women* that operated in the last years of the PRL (1986-89) (Krizsan 2012). Nominally, the post went through not only several ministries, but also titular changes – from *Plenipotentiary for Women and Family* (1991-2) to *Plenipotentiary for Family* only (1997-2001), disappearing on several occasions depending on the political commitments of the elected parliaments (1989-91, 1992-95).

The institutional government-level position was created in December 2001, by the then prime minister Leszek Miller (SLD).⁵⁶ At that time it was called the *Government Plenipotentiary for the Equal Status of Women and Men* and, in 2002, its competencies were extended to include fighting all types of discrimination (not only sex/gender-based). The existence of a government-level position for gender equality that was to combat discrimination based on sex/gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and beliefs was one of the conditions that candidate countries had to fulfil before joining the EU. Even though technically the plenipotentiary for equality was only supposed to initiate and organize an ombudsperson office and institution, the EU Commission's Directorate General for Enlargement accepted the efforts and considered the Copenhagen criteria fulfilled before the accession. The Polish government never created an ombudsperson office working against all forms of discrimination due to alleged lack of funds, so the work continued within the frame of the plenipotentiary institution.

The post is a government position at the level of secretary of state in the chancellery of the prime minister. The first two plenipotentiaries were part of the 'left-wing' SLD government. From the beginning, the position was controversial in the Polish parliament and there were several attempts to restrict its workings. There were two

⁵⁶ Leszek Miller was the prime minister for the SLD - Democratic Left Alliance, a social-democratic political party in Poland, formed in 1991 as an electoral alliance of centre-left parties, which has always been considered a 'post-communist' party.

petitions calling for the dismissal of Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka⁵⁷ and Magdalena Środa⁵⁸ in 2002-2004. In 2003, the right-wing opposition party LPR (the League of Polish Families) proposed to rename and re-establish the position as the *Plenipotentiary for Family Matters*, but the legislative proposal fell through in the parliament. In 2005, a proposed law on the equal treatment of women and men and outlawing all forms of discrimination based on sex/gender, race, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, age, and sexual orientation, which would have expanded the plenipotentiary position and its scope, was voted down in parliament (cf. Sarata 2010).

After this, the office of the plenipotentiary focused on researching and producing reports pertaining to anti-discrimination policy. The first two plenipotentiaries also actively participated in civil society activities and supported NGO-run campaigns promoting feminist and LGBTQ+ causes. Magdalena Środa famously criticized the role of the catholic church in Poland for ‘promoting the culture of violence’ and accused the church hierarchy of covering up the scale of the problem of domestic violence in the country and the resistance to divorce.⁵⁹ In general, the right-wing and religious groups did not look favourably on the plenipotentiary position. Hence, after the 2005 elections, a much more right-wing dominated parliament and government came into place, the position was scrapped altogether. Despite protests from civil society and in spite of the existence of the legal requirement for the position, the two subsequent PiS governments (Law and Justice) did not nominate anyone and the office disappeared. The position was recreated in 2008 by the newly-elected (Fall 2007) center-right PO (Civic Platform) government, as the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment. Since then it has been held by two PO female MPs and one feminist

⁵⁷ Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka was a Polish politician who was a MP from 1993 (with a hiatus in 1997–2001) until her death in the Smolensk plane crash in 2010. 2004-2005, she was the Deputy Prime Minister in the SLD government, while concurrently, filling the post of Minister for Social Policy. Jaruga-Nowacka was the government Plenipotentiary for Equality in the SLD government between December 2001 and August 2004. She was one of the few Polish politicians who openly said they were feminist.

⁵⁸ Magdalena Środa is a philosopher, professor of ethics at the University of Warsaw, and a feminist author. She was the government's Plenipotentiary for the Equal Status of Women and Men in the SLD cabinet between August 2004 and November 2005.

⁵⁹ Available at: <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,53600,2436973.html> (accessed November 2016).

academic (Małgorzata Fuszara). Following the parliamentary elections in 2015, there was much controversy whether the position would be discarded again.⁶⁰

The weak institutional grounding of gender equality policies in Poland, the lack of dedicated financial resources, and the narrow understanding of gender equality limited to the labour market and economy produced a superficial impact of the EU on gender equality within Polish politics (Grabowska 2014). Arguably, the legal changes and their implementation have not had a radical and systemic impact on women's issues.

Political and institutional changes seem to be driven by a 'combination of EU pressure, anti-equality agendas and incidental moments of progress linked to special policy moments, rather than positive commitment to any specific equality process' (Krizsan et al. 2014: 63). Following Poland's accession to the EU, debates on abortion, gender equality, and rights of same-sex couples often brought up notions of Europeanization and European values in both positive and negative senses (as can be seen in the empirical part of this dissertation). Debates on those issues were more seriously polarized than the transposition of EU legal provisions. The same applies to the debates on the meaning of national culture, and the inevitable changes the latter would have to undergo after joining the EU.

Conclusions

As I argued in this chapter, 1989 led to repeated reconfigurations of identity. All perceived facets of 'communism' had to be overthrown in the transformation. Both the transformation and Europeanization were implemented most comprehensively in the economic sphere through the adoption of neoliberal market reforms such as structural adjustment measures, privatization, and the scaling down of social benefits, etc. (Bobako 2006). These economic transformations produced huge social and economic inequalities (Sowa 2015) and created large groups of disenchanted and disgruntled people, thereby raising the levels of discontent (Ost 2005). According to Andrzej Leder (2014), the deployment of nationalist-catholic discourses provided an answer to

⁶⁰ In early 2016, prime minister Szydło nominated the first man to the position that is now called the *Government Plenipotentiary for Civil Society and Equal Treatment*.

societal discontent and pointed to a ‘culprit’ in the form of Europe and its decadent social values. Within these discourses, the family played a central role as the embodiment of the nation and tradition (see further discussion in the next chapter). This has meant an almost automatic opposition to norms and policies promoting gender equality as they are seen to threaten the family.

Throughout the 1990s, subsequent governments and parliaments in Poland have shown an ambivalent position in terms of their commitment to implement formal gender equality policies. As Rutkowska (2008) suggests, one of the reasons for the insufficient application of the gender mainstreaming in Poland was that it was not taken seriously. While aspiring to EU accession and in the early membership period, the parliament wanted to appear progressive and adopted EU gender equality directives. Despite pro forma and ‘on paper’ democratization and diffusion of gender mainstreaming EU policies, not much has been done to entrench equality values institutionally or practically in society. Gender equality commitments were a token addition to politics that ostensibly showed how progressive the *Sejm* was (Rutkowaska 2008; Zbyszewska 2014). At the same time, nothing was done to counter the Eurosceptic groups in Polish politics that successfully mobilized and organized the anger of the losing groups of transformation (cf. Ost 2005). This has paved the way for the current dismantling of the already weak pre-existing institutional guarantors of anti-discrimination and equality, using an ‘anti-gender campaign’ that later became the name of the game when it came to family and welfare politics.

As the opening quote of the chapter suggested, during the transformation Poland was supposed to or expected to change from the ugly, ‘red’ system and return to ‘nice’ and ‘proper’ Europe. Significantly, Poland is presented as a woman choosing dresses – the motif of anthropomorphising the nation into the female form will come up more specifically in the discussions in the ensuing analysis (especially chapter 6). This chapter has surveyed the academic debate concerning the processes of democratization in Eastern Europe and in Poland specifically. As I have shown, this was not a straight-line progression and positive development in terms of inclusion, political and civil rights and in particular not in terms of economic rights. The chapter has sketched the main trends of the transformation and post-transformation politics and depicted the

already exclusionary tendencies and trajectories of the 1990s and early 2000s. I have also shown the feminist critiques of transformation and added a layer of intra-feminist debates concerning the judgments and expectations regarding Europeanization. I have argued that transformation and Europeanization, as implemented in the neoliberal form in Poland, were in essence globalization processes, which produce backlash.

The first section of the thesis has outlined the research puzzle, the theoretical and methodological framework and, in this chapter, it has established the exclusionary and anti-equality legacies of transformation. The following chapter opens up the empirical analysis by focusing on parliamentary discourses concerning family politics in 2011-2015.

Chapter 5: Constructing the family

'guy + girl = normal family'
Right-wing slogan⁶¹

The first empirical chapter presents the case study analysis on family and welfare parliamentary debates, with a view to explore the construction of subjectivity and values in this discursive field. The focus area of family politics is broadly defined and includes among others debates on reproductive and women's health rights, civil unions, pension reform, sexual education and issues of maternity leave and foster care. The key argument is that MPs construct discursively a particular family model in Poland, which shapes people's mentalities and practices concerning 'natural' differences between women and men. I analyse the deeply rooted cultural and religious background that prescribes models of both femininity and masculinity in the Polish *Sejm*. The chapter begins with an overview of the political and legislative situation in the Polish parliament that is relevant to the subsequent case study, including the political distribution of forces, the legal *status quo*, and a short description of the particular legislative proposals that were under discussion. The main questions guiding the discussion around which the chapter is organized are the ones introduced in the previous methods section: Who is speaking? What/who is being talked about? What subjects and values are produced? How is truth created? What can and cannot be said?

Political and legal status quo

The Polish Family and Care Code (*Kodeks rodzinny i opiekuńczy*) and the Civic Code (*Kodeks cywilny*) regulate the matters connected to family law in general in Poland. The codes specifically deal with marriage, adoption, the termination of relationships, including divorce, annulment, property settlements, alimony, child custody and visitation, child support and alimony awards, and juvenile adjudication. The codes do not provide a legal definition of 'family'. The only actual legal document that provides

⁶¹ In the original: '*Normalna Rodzina - Chłopak i Dziewczyna*' is a right-wing chant and slogan at nationalist and pro-family demonstrations in Poland.

the definition of ‘family’ in Poland is the 2004 law regarding social care, where in Article 6 §14 family is defined as: ‘people related or unrelated to each other, remaining in an actual relationship, living, and running a household together’.⁶² This is a broad and comprehensive definition that is rarely remembered or used in Polish political debates.

Instead, many deputies refer to Article 18 of the Polish constitution, when talking about the ‘family’. This article states that ‘motherhood and parenthood shall be placed under the protection and care of the Republic of Poland’ (sic!) Significantly, there is no distinction made about fatherhood on par with motherhood in the Polish constitution and, as I show later, this has discursive and practical implications in the Polish parliament. Article 18 of the constitution is controversial for another reason. Its first section reads that ‘marriage as a union between man and woman (...) is under the protection and care of the Republic of Poland’.⁶³ Following a reductionist legal understanding, it allows the opponents of civil unions to claim that civil partnerships are illegal and unconstitutional, because only marriages exist in the founding document.

Both the Family and the Civic Code date back to 1964 and have been amended and supplemented by various individual laws as well as codified EU laws and treaties in the subsequent years. Thus, Polish family law consists of a somewhat curious mix of PRL-era stipulations that have been partly complemented or overridden and (post-) transformation legislative developments, which often were called for because of changing societal needs over time (*in vitro* fertilization, civil unions) and changing ideologies about the family (restrictions on abortion). As I discussed in chapter 4, widespread social restructuring along neoliberal and market-oriented lines was part of the transformation and regime changes after 1989. Social service delivery was supposed to be transferred from the state to the market and the private service sector.

⁶² My own translation. The full text of the law is available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20040640593> (accessed November 2016).

⁶³ The full text of the Polish Constitution in English is available at: <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm> (accessed April 2016).

In Poland, even though many social and welfare benefits (such as sick leave, leave to take care of sick children, or childcare leave) were maintained nominally, many employees and workers were pushed out of fulltime work contracts into the equivalent of zero-hours contracts and self-employment; this determined that they were not eligible for any of the said benefits. The financial compensation of welfare benefits was severely reduced and maintained at a low level in the post-transformation years.

The specific debates and legal proposals I discuss in this chapter are concrete additions or amendments to the legal status quo at the beginning of the seventh parliamentary term (2011-2015). In 2015, for instance, the benefit for taking care of a handicapped minor was the equivalent of around £97 monthly (under the condition that the carer was not working, otherwise the benefit did not apply). One of the major debates in the discussed parliamentary term was whether to raise this allowance. In 2013, the ruling coalition voted through a change in maternity leave (which was supposed to be called ‘parental leave’, but eventually was not; officially it is ‘childcare leave’). Paid childcare leave has been extended to 12 months, with a provision of 2 weeks reserved for fathers only (allowed, but not obligatory). According to 2014 data, only around 7% of fathers took up the possibility of taking parental leave (GUS 2014).

Following general austerity trends in Europe at the time, the ruling coalition PO-PSL promised and legislated a change in the pensions system in 2012. The debates on this bill are part of the analysis in this chapter. Higher retirement age was supposed to be phased in over time (until 2020), going up to 67 years for both women and men (from 60 and 65 years, respectively). This was one of the flagship projects of PO and was presented as a ‘must’ given the economic and demographic situation in the country. It was also in line with wider European trends – retirement age was raised in many EU member states as part of austerity packages supported by the EU Commission.

Another policy area that is included in the analysis in this chapter is reproductive and sexual health care. Poland has a restrictive abortion law (one of the most restrictive in Europe next to the Republic of Ireland and Malta). The 1993 law on ‘Family-Planning, Human Embryo Protection and Conditions of Legal Pregnancy Termination’ allows the termination of pregnancy in three instances only: when the pregnancy is the result

of a crime (illegal act), when the health and/or life of the mother is in danger, and when there is a 'credible risk' of severe and irreversible damages to the foetus. This law has been widely debated among the public and is often referred to as an 'abortion compromise' or a 'historic compromise'. The concept of a 'compromise' has been criticized as a gross linguistic and semantic manipulation, which perpetuates the impression that the law was a result of negotiations or national consultations (Czerwinska and Piotrowska 2009). When using the term no one ever clarifies whom that compromise was between. In fact, it was a compromise between catholic church hierarchs and ultra-religious politicians, who demanded complete banning of abortion and 'compromised' on three exceptions instead.

In November 1992, when the restrictive abortion law was debated in parliament, the Parliamentary Women's Group called for a national referendum in favour of a liberal abortion law. More than 1,2 million signatures were collected (the legally required number was 100,000), but the *Sejm* ignored the citizens' legislative initiative and went on to pass the restrictive abortion law that is in operation until now. Opinion polls show how the legal status quo has changed public perceptions on abortion. In 1997, 65% of Poles believed that a woman should have the right to terminate pregnancy whenever she decides to do it. By 2011, however, the number fell to 48% (CBOS 2011). According to official state statistics, there were just over 700 legal abortions in 2012 (in a country of around 38 million people). NGOs estimate the number of illegal abortions at between 80,000 – 200,000 annually.⁶⁴ Therefore, the restricted access to abortion has had no impact on fertility rates in Poland, which are one of the lowest in Europe.⁶⁵

The Polish constitution is ambiguous and can be used by the anti-choice advocates. For instance, Article 38 stipulates that 'everyone's life is protected'. At the same time,

⁶⁴ The Polish Federation for Women and Family Planning (*Federacja na rzecz Kobiet i Planowania Rodziny – Federa*) is a pro-choice NGO that provides legal help, advice and support to women about reproductive health and sexual rights. They also compile reports and data on the topic. For more information, see their website: http://www.federa.org.pl/dokumenty_pdf/aborcja/Raportpopr.pdf (accessed December 2014).

⁶⁵ According to the Main Statistical Office, Polish fertility rate was 1.29 child/woman in 2013 (with 2.1 children/woman usually considered as the 'replacement rate' needed to maintain the size of a country's population at a stable level).

it does not explicitly state the right of life ‘since conception’ and attempts at such constitutional change failed in the previous parliamentary terms. The restrictive abortion law was liberalized shortly in 1996 by the SLD government (it entered into force in 1997) to allow abortion until the 12th week of pregnancy if ‘a woman is in a difficult personal situation’. The provision allowing for abortion based on social grounds was withdrawn by the parliament after the 1997 elections and following a ruling of the Constitutional Tribunal. In 1997, the Constitutional Tribunal judged that the constitution protects life ‘at all phases of development’ and used the term ‘conceived child’⁶⁶, which is now often understood as interpreting the constitutional protection of life since the moment of conception.

To date there is no legislation (or even legislative initiatives in preparation) on civil unions or partnerships. Two attempts in the seventh parliamentary term were voted down (and off the parliamentary agenda in general). The TR legal proposal was based on similar legislation from other European Union member states and allowed for the partners’ joint tax declarations, some tax benefits, medical information rights as well as the right to decide and inherit in the case of one of the partners’ death. The PO proposal was more conservative and did not allow for joint tax declarations or tax benefits. Neither of the legislative proposals allowed for adoption by same-sex couples. During a vigorous parliamentary debate, the then prime minister Donald Tusk, who was in favour of sending the proposals on for further work in the committees, clashed with the then Minister of Justice Jarosław Gowin, who claimed that all civil partnerships are unconstitutional. In the end, both projects were voted down thanks to the dissenting votes of the ruling coalition MPs (they also voted against the project proposed by their own party).

As argued in the previous chapters, the catholic church is a primary political actor in Poland, and reproductive policies are not the only field where this is clear. The current Polish education system provides for two hours per week of religious education from

⁶⁶ The problem with the Constitutional Tribunal ruling is that it based its explanation on the new draft of the constitution, which at the time of the ruling was not in force yet. For more discussion see: http://www.hli.org.pl/pl/orzecz/k_26_96.html (accessed April 2016).

kindergarten or pre-school until the end of high school (so roughly from the age of 3 to 19). All Polish schools (public and private) are bound by law to provide an alternative subject of 'ethics'. The European Court of Human Rights has judged in 2010 that Poland does not respect religious freedom in education and that everyone is presumed catholic by default (Chelstowska et al. 2013). Therefore, students who wish to opt out from religious education classes are singled out at school and left without occupation in the periods when their classmates have religious education classes.

Moreover, the Polish education system does not include a 'sexual education' subject per se. All schools are supposed to provide a regular subject called 'education preparing for family life', but the implementation of this is cursory at best and depends on the schools. Parents can excuse students from attending 'education preparing for family life' classes due to personal beliefs. For this reason, in the parliamentary term under analysis, TR and SLD have been trying to introduce sex education classes at all levels of compulsory education. The proposals were voted down (due to PO, PiS, and PSL votes).

Until 2014, rape and other sexual offences were prosecuted only if the prosecution was initiated by the victim privately through the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code. This meant very low numbers of sexual crimes being reported and tried in court. Following the passing of the new amendment to the Criminal Code in 2013, rape is a matter of public prosecution. This change is keeping in line with the legal recommendations of the Council of Europe and in various EU documents.

Until the parliamentary term under discussion, Poland had no legislation regulating or officially providing for the public funding of *in vitro* fertilization, even though procedures of assisted reproductive technology have been performed in the country since the late 1980s. In response to a European Court of Justice sentence against Poland, in June 2015, the *Sejm* legislated for public financing of up to three IVF attempts per couple (none for single parents) and without the possibility of holding frozen embryos.

Similarly, the legal situation of transgender people in Poland is not legally streamlined. Trans people have been legally recognized in Poland since the 1960s, and the medical

and psycho-sexual procedures for transitioning are established. However, the bureaucratic and legal-administrative side are not properly codified. In order to have their gender identity recognized through the official confirmation of sexual designation in personal documents (ID, passport birth certificate), trans people needed to take their closest family to court (usually parents) through the Civic Code. Furthermore, Poland did not issue new birth certificates for trans citizens and did not have a legal mechanism to ensure that all employment and education history was properly adjusted to a person's new personal data.⁶⁷

The new legislative proposal, the Gender Accordance Act, presented to the *Sejm* in 2013 by the first Polish openly trans MP, Anna Grodzka, stipulated that only the applicant was involved in the gender recognition process. After a court proceeding, applications would be provided with legal recognition within three months of submission, without them having to undergo any medical interventions, including hormone therapy. Trans people would also receive new birth certificates and new documentation proving their education and employment history. Following the first reading in parliament, the bill was stalled in committees and returned to the plenary conspicuously before the 2015 elections. It has been passed with amendments but, following the 2015 presidential elections, the new president Andrzej Duda vetoed the bill and the old rules remained in operation.

Based on this background, the following debates, presented in Table 5.5, have been singled out for analysis as relevant in the seventh parliamentary term.

Table 5.5 Family and welfare politics parliamentary debates 2011-2015.

Legislative area	Bill proposals ⁶⁸
1. Changes in the foster care system	1 legislative proposal

⁶⁷ Information based on the NGO-advocacy group *Trans-Fuzja*, which supports trans people in Poland. Available at: http://transfuzja.org/en/artykuly/press_releases.htm (accessed November 2016).

⁶⁸ A detailed list of the analysed legislative proposals with their identification numbers, dates of the proceedings and debates is provided in Appendix I at the end of the dissertation.

2.	Family planning laws and abortion legislation	5 separate legislative proposals (3 of restriction, 2 of liberalization)
3.	Legal establishment of civil partnerships	2 separate legislative proposals
4.	National programme combatting domestic violence	1 legislative proposal
5.	Changes to child care leave	1 legislative proposal
6.	Changes in the criminal code allowing for the public prosecution of rape and sexual assault	1 legislative proposal
7.	Bill on gender recognition	1 legislative proposal
8.	Change of retirement age	1 legislative proposal
9.	Introduction sexual education in schools and kindergartens	1 legislative proposal
10.	Codification of funding and procedural rules of <i>in vitro</i> fertilization	3 separate legislative proposals

(Source: own compilation).

Who is speaking?

The agents using the discourses under analysis are on the same power levels and equally influential in terms of their institutional position and the inherent discursive power. They are all directly elected MPs, who hold certain privileged discursive powers through their membership in the institution of the parliament. At first glance, there is a clear-cut division between the right and 'left' sides of the parliament in terms of the discourses they employ. The 'left' side of the plenary seems to be promulgating more liberal and progressive stances on family and welfare, while the right side uses traditionally ultra-conservative and faith-based arguments. However, on closer consideration it often happens that deputies do not follow their party lines. The supposedly liberal and centrist PO use the same discourse as PiS and SP when it comes to abortion, women's rights and sexual minority rights. Similarly, the 'left' SLD deputies refer to catholic figures as their authority figures, just as the right-wing MPs do.

Each of the parties seems to have ‘go-to’ people – *de facto* spokespersons for family and welfare topics. For PiS, these are Krystyna Pawłowicz, Marzena Wróbel, Anna Sobecka, Elżbieta Rafalska, Robert Telus, Bolesław Piecha, Jan Warzecha or Andrzej Duda. PO has liberal target MPs (Joanna Kluzik-Rostkowska, Artur Dunin) and conservative ones (Abraham Godson, Piotr van der Coghén). PSL shows a more coherent conservative stance through Franciszek Stefaniuk and Dariusz Dziadzio. Similarly, Patryk Jaki, Tadeusz Woźniak, and Eugeniusz Grzeszczak, SP (the small PiS splinter party) provides strictly right-wing and ultraconservative arguments. SLD’s Marek Balt and Ryszard Kalisz are supposed to be the liberal-left counterbalance, but in practice follow the dominant narratives. TR deputies Wincenty Elsner, Robert Biedroń, Armand Ryfiński, Wanda Nowicka (later non-aligned), and Zofia Popiołek are the main proponents of discourses on Europeanization, modernization and liberal civic rights.

What is being talked about in the family and welfare debates?

Marriage

The first theme that I have singled out is marriage. I purposefully call it ‘marriage’ instead of ‘family’ because, as I show here, the dominant discourses in this field in the *Sejm* use the two terms interchangeably and make no difference between them. A marriage is a family; a family cannot exist without marriage. This hegemonic discourse emerges clearly in the parliamentary debates on the institutionalization of civil partnerships, foster care, and the legislation against domestic violence. It is particularly visible in the conservative resistance to any entrenchment or formalization of currently informal partnerships: ‘Should we be creating an alternative to the family, a choice of a significant section of society?’ (Patryk Jaki, 25.01.2013, 32, 242).⁶⁹ Here ‘family’ has a specific cultural significance and means heterosexual (and usually religiously sanctioned) ‘marriage’, because it does not allow for the possible contradictory idea that there are other forms of ‘family’ – like patchwork, informal, or same-sex

⁶⁹ All references to parliamentary debates follow the format: name of the speaker, date of the speech, the number of the parliamentary meeting, the page numbers as they appear in the official stenographs.

relationships. There is an immense pressure to refer to only nuclear families and to undermine any other forms of personal bonds.

Within this discursive field the key word 'marriage' is treated as one with a stable and permanent meaning that has been true since time immemorial. 'Marriage is a relationship sanctioned by culture, religion, law, and social custom. Marriages and families are the bases of the nation, society and state' (Marzena Wróbel, 24.01.2013, 32, 174). The understanding of marriage within this discourse draws on Christian and catholic tradition: 'Marriage is procreation' (Artur Dunin, 24.01.2013, 32, 198). This mode of family life is constructed as an ethos guiding the beliefs and behaviours of not just the parliament but of the whole society. Any real or perceived attempt to change the institution of marriage is seen as a coup against the entire society as well as the moral order. '[The authors of the proposed legislation, proponents of civil partnerships] are trying to depreciate the traditionally understood family and create mayhem in ethical issues, particularly to erase the difference between good and evil' (Tadeusz Woźniak, 24.01.2013, 32, 197). For this reason, Patryk Jaki (SP) warns: 'Please think twice before you raise a hand against the traditional family institution' (25.01.2013, 32, 242).

Defining marriage as a relation aimed at procreation (practically echoing the biblical idea of marriage as a means 'to prevent sin'), naturally leads the proponents of this discourse to the argument that any relationship that does not produce or potentially cannot produce offspring is vapid, empty, and socially harmful. 'The proposed partnerships have only hedonistic and auto-destructive aims for the person, their partner and the members of their families' (Krystyna Pawłowicz, 24.01.2013, 32, 163). Similarly: 'Marriage and family are the future of the state (...) Homoerotic relationships in all their unnaturalness do not serve the state' (Tadeusz Woźniak, 24.01.2013, 32, 170). This discourse displays elements of interdiscursivity with other nationalist and demographic discourses, which are also present within the family politics topic (see below). It rests on the assumption that, in order to be good, a relationship needs to be useful and fruitful to society. 'Two gentlemen satisfying their sexual lust, just as two ladies in a similar situation, cannot demand privileges based on

this, because *they are not a marriage, they are not a family*' (Tadeusz Woźniak, 24.01.2013, 32, 170).⁷⁰

The proponents of the hegemonic discourse that family is marriage see the problem in the alleged fact that a 'homosexual lobby' and 'leftist and liberal forces' are trying to dismantle or undermine the institution of marriage by advocating the institutionalization of competing forms of relationships. Repeatedly, all sides in the parliament discuss 'the legalization of civil partnerships' which is technically and legally incorrect because civil partnerships are not illegal in Poland. This wording and semantic choice however implies a notion of lack of authorization and propriety in relation to informal (non-marriage) relationships.

This was strongly reiterated in the civil partnerships debates in January 2013. In response to legal proposals put forward by TR and SLD, PO, PSL, PiS, and SP MPs repeatedly asked why there was a need to legislate for civil partnerships if there is already the option to opt for either civil or denominational marriage. They present this as a coup d'état. 'Today we are witnessing a proposal to liberalize concepts, giving relationships new parameters. (...) The family as a basic social cell is being overshadowed. Its clarity is becoming blotted. (...) It comes to the point that that the constitutional format of the family is becoming unfashionable, unmodern' (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 24.01.2013, 32, 167). MPs like Mr Stefaniuk (PSL) claimed that there needed to be a reinforcement of the institution of marriage and the re-confirmation of what they saw as the constitutional model of social life. 'If moral disintegration and decline are happening (...) let us try to respect every person and present the basic, constitutional model of the family (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 24.01.2013, 32, 167-8).⁷¹ This argument is based on the conflation of 'family' with 'marriage', following the discussed above interpretation of Article 18 of the Constitution, according to which marriage is under the special protection of the Republic of Poland (see above).

⁷⁰ My own emphasis.

⁷¹ In fact, the Polish constitution does not stipulate for any specific 'family models'.

There is a competing discourse to the hegemonic narrative discussed above. Its proponents are largely TR MPs, together with some individuals from SLD and PO. The main argument of this discourse is rather matter-of-fact and goes along the lines that ‘people live in informal relationships and you cannot do anything about it, so let us make their lives more dignified and easier.’ It shows interdiscursive elements with the modernity and Europe discourses discussed later in the chapter. Nonetheless it has not risen to such prominence as the hegemonic discourse. This might be due to the fact that its proponents in the parliament are fewer, no matter how prominent they are: for instance, the former PM Donald Tusk and former Plenipotentiary for the Equal Treatment Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz were two of its most vocal advocates.

Motherhood

The discursive field of motherhood is closely related to the one about family and marriage. ‘Fatherhood’ or ‘parenting’ do not exist in any of the discourses and debates within the Polish parliament. Fathers rarely make an appearance and ‘fatherhood’ is mentioned in very few contexts, for instance when talking about lesbian couples: ‘Laws legalizing homosexual relationships give the false pretence that such relationships are good for society and for its development. (...) Children lack the experience of fatherhood or motherhood.’ (Anna Sobecka, 24.01.2013, 32, 176). Outside this context, where fatherhood becomes relevant or mentioned only because of its absence, the conspicuously missing fathers stand in contrast with the almost mythical mother figures constructed discursively in the parliament.

Discourses on motherhood are most strongly present in abortion and family planning debates. In these debates the words ‘mother’ and ‘woman’ are used interchangeably. Accordingly, all women are (or will be) mothers. Women who chose not to be mothers are murderers. ‘What is the difference between a mother that kills her own child in a barrel from [a mother] that kills it in her womb?’⁷² (Andrzej Dera, 26.09.2012, 22, 63). Not carrying a pregnancy to term is considered evil and amoral: ‘the proposed law [abortion liberalization proposal] is soulless, written without respect for humans, has

⁷² Reference to a media-hyped story of a woman who killed her new born infants and hid their bodies in barrels on her farm.

a technical, thoughtless, and inhuman character that reinforces the brutalization of people and pushes women into the abyss' (Krystyna Pawłowicz, 26.09.2012, 22, 64).

Pregnancy is especially romanticized using euphemistic nouns instead of factual or medical terms: 'womb' instead of uterus, 'carrying a child under her heart' instead of being pregnant. Abortion is discursively constructed as murder allowed under the current provisions of the constitution – regardless of the fact that the constitution is very restrictive. Often this narrative aids itself with claims that the majority of the society is against abortion. The agents of this discourse argue (mainly PiS and United Poland deputies, but also some PO MPs) that this is due to 'aborters', 'exterminators for pregnancy termination' and the 'contraceptive lobby' that have infiltrated the 'leftist and liberal' side of the parliament. They see the solution in the restriction of the existing law and have attempted to implement this several times each parliamentary term since 1993.

Since abortion is unequivocally considered as an evil, it is part of the 'civilization of death', a term coined by the former pope John Paul II that has become a widely used phrase among conservative politicians and activists worldwide. Even MPs advocating the liberalization of the current law argue that '(...) personally I would not terminate a pregnancy' (Zofia Popiołek, 26.09.2012, 22, 66). This reflects how much it is permissible to say in the parliament. Mentioning abortion as a possible option or solution is inconceivable in the institution. It is argued that women (=mothers) must always welcome pregnancies and rejoice about them. In keeping with the characteristic anti-choice style that has been observed by feminists worldwide, male deputies are experts on pregnancy: 'The biggest joy will be for every child to be born' (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 26.09.2012, 22, 61). By default, in this context, fathers are constructed as traditional protectors and breadwinners of the family.

This is explained through the construction of the 'natural' difference between the sexes. 'God, or nature if someone prefers it that way, created humans in such a way that man is usually big and strong, so as to defend the family and woman is warm and caring in order to care for their children' (Piotr van der Coghen, 26.09.2012, 22, 67). Hence the characteristics are naturalized-normalized and explained in biological

terms, leading to the social legitimation of inequalities, which are purported to be the 'natural order of things' that needs to be perpetuated and protected. This is reinforced in the debates on family planning and abortion: 'A mother should be surrounded with care, cordiality, warmth, financial support, instead of pushing her to kill her child' (Anna Sobecka, 26.09.2012, 22, 64). Deputies repeatedly ask to protect motherhood and parenting, but never fatherhood. 'We need a reinforcement of activities that protect motherhood' (Elżbieta Rafalska, 26.09.2012, 22, 75).

Here, one of the most dominant discourses claims that life begins with conception; hence, by extension, abortion is murder and women who terminate pregnancies are killers:

New life is a human being (Bolesław Piecha, 26.09. 2012, 22, 59).

This is an issue of humanity, no matter the worldview, no matter if they are believers or non-believers. Conceived life, life that has begun should be defended by any other conscious human being (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 26.09.2012, 22, 61).

Based on these debates, there is a very clear hegemonic discourse about motherhood in Poland – motherhood, not 'fatherhood' or 'parenting'. 'Fathers' rarely make an appearance and 'fatherhood' is mentioned in very few cases, such as the debate on extending maternity leave. In this instance 'motherhood' and 'parenting' are often used interchangeably, with occasional reference to fathers who might want to '*take maternity*'. There is no realization on either side of the political spectrum of the logical and grammatical incoherence and ambiguity of sentences like: 'We propose the right to maternity leave for both parents' (Beata Szydło, 14.05.2013, 40, 4) or '(...) when a parent returns to work after maternity' (Ryszard Zbrzyzny, 14.05.2013, 40, 9). As argued, there is pronounced worry about fatherhood only in the context of same-sex relationships.

The debates on care work are also gendered, but give the impression of being much more inconspicuous and neutral. When referring to the people who perform care work, MPs use the masculine noun '*opiekun*' (carer), never the female variant '*opiekunka*'.⁷³

⁷³ The Polish language is explicitly gendered. There are 5 grammatical genders (3 singular form genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter, and 2 plural form genders: masculine and non-masculine).

Most of the people performing care work (both paid and unpaid) are in fact women. However, when talking about carers of disabled children the word '*opiekun*' is supplanted by the word 'mother'. This is in line with what feminist scholars have been ardent in stressing, namely that reproductive and care work has always been a 'woman's issue' and an invisible part of the state and family economies.⁷⁴

The Polish model of masculinity presented in the debates suggests no responsibility for dependants. In fact, this is reflected by statistical data in Poland; for instance, the rates of alimony payments in Poland are among the lowest in Europe. According to the Women's Rights Center in Poland, only between 16-17% of fathers pay the court-assigned alimony for their children and dependants.⁷⁵ This again points to an unwitting and unconscious family model, in which care is privatized and seen as a responsibility put solely on women. Arguably, this understanding is stronger in the neoliberal market economy model, as feminist political economists argue (cf. Rai and Waylen 2014).

MPs never mention fathers in reference to care work; similarly, as in the case of childcare leave, there is only occasional mention of 'parents'. At the same time, women do not exist on their own, but only by the virtue of their connection to men: '(...) every Polish woman, our daughters, sisters, wives' (Marek Balt, 26.09. 2012, 22, 86).

Children

MPs argue that 'children are our highest national good' (Andrzej Duda, 26.09.2012, 22, 70), but anti-violence debates convey the idea that children are practically a possession of parents in Poland. In the views of especially conservative MPs, raising

All nouns have a grammatical gender. Adjectives, numbers, pronouns, and verbs are changed according to the gender of the noun they refer to. The rule of thumb is that if a feminine gender-form of the noun does not exist, it should be formed out of the male noun using specific suffixes and endings (and vice versa).

⁷⁴ There is a vast literature on the gendered nature of the political economy of care work. I have been basing on Acker (2004); Bakker and Silvey (2008); Bedford and Rai (2010); as well as the whole volume 36 of *Signs* – the Special Issue on 'Feminists Theorize International Political Economy'; Kelly et al. (2001); Peterson (2005); Rai and Waylen (2008); and Whitworth (2000) among others.

⁷⁵ Available at: http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1019407,title,Nowe-przepisy-batem-na-uchylajacych-sie-od-placenia-alimentow-Tak-ale-tylko-niektorych,wid,17679790,wiadomosc.html?ticaid=117d6f&_tictsn=3 (accessed September 2016).

children according to parents' opinions is an unquestioned and incontrovertible right in the Polish legislation. For them, this right extends even further:

(...) a child in a shop [gets a temper tantrum] (...) and the mother attempts to pick the child up. Finally, she spansks the child and the child calms down. I would not like to promote beating children and the use of violence, *but* I am talking about *normality* (Tadeusz Woźniak 05.04.2013, 37, 239).

In fact, in the previous parliamentary term Poland witnessed an exuberant debate on the signing and ratification of the European Convention on the Rights of the Child, in which a large part of the MPs defended vocally parents' rights to spank children when they want to.

In general, any provisions pertaining to family life are seen as the state encroaching on the autonomy of the family: 'the Polish legal system has many laws that allow for the interference in family life' (Józefa Hryniewicz, 05.04.2013, 37, 232). PiS, SP, and PSL MPs especially (but also many from PO's more conservative wing) see themselves as the legislative protectors of the Polish families vis-à-vis the '(...) abuses by public authorities against the rights of families against their subjectivity and autonomy' (Józefa Hryniewicz, 05.04.2013, 37, 232). In this discourse the biggest evil is to 'take away children from their families' (Krystyna Ozga, 05.04.2013, 37, 244). 'Children are taken away from parents for whatever reason' (Marek Matuszewski, 05.04.2013, 37, 245). 'This law along with the foster care legislation interferes in the life of the family' (Waldemar Andzel, 05.04.2013, 37, 246).

Furthermore, debates on gender confirmation and sexual education center around the trope of the 'child in danger'. The conservative concern with minors reflects their patriarchal understanding of family, adding to the neoliberal rhetoric of individual choices and parents' right to raise their child as they want. Children do not have autonomy in either of the discourses. Conservative MPs are especially vocally worried about the appropriateness of making gender- and sexuality-related decisions by underage people. MPs are also concerned with keeping children safe from 'sexual demoralization' in the form of information on reproductive health, sexualities, gender identity and expression, informed consent or birth control methods. The parents' rights to decide for their offspring is superior to the rights of minors to education and knowledge.

This shows that the patriarchal model of family does not only put women and men in particular power positions, but also creates a vertical axis of power between the elder and the younger – parents and children. Under the guise of autonomy and respect, we see a perpetuation of children as an extension of their parents in terms of values and worldviews. Whatever autonomy children might have, it is subservient to parents' autonomy, which restricts the rights of the former. This point of view is prevalent both in the Sejm and in the society at large. Recent opinion polls show that over 63% of people in Poland agree that physical punishment of children is permissible.⁷⁶ SP deputies have attempted to institutionalize this patriarchal definition of power in the family by establishing a new position in the government – the Ombudsman for the Rights of the Family, instead of an Ombudsman for the Rights of Children, which is the current post.

Domestic violence

The parliamentary debates concerning national programs and laws aiming at eliminating violence in the family shed light on the ideal vision of family that is projected by the *Sejm*. The majority of MPs regularly point to poverty and alcohol as the only causes of violence and use of force in the family (e.g. Andrzej Szlachta, 05.04.2013, 37, 243). In this manner, they paint a picture where violence occurs only in pathological and deprived families, thereby obscuring the reality that can be observed through statistics. This also vilifies poorer citizens and is instrumental in their social exclusion. Conspicuously, the debates on violence only mention 'victims' and 'perpetrators' and while they often express sympathy and pity with the former (cf. Cynthia Enloe's 2000 '*womenandchildren*') and severe contempt for the latter, they almost never talk about men as the ones who statistically commit violence most often. This instance of silence on gender is functional to bolstering and keeping up the image of the traditional family.

Only individual (former) TR deputies dare to present stereotypical gender roles and traditional power hierarchies in the family as plausible underlying causes of violence.

⁷⁶ According to the Main Statistical Office data for 2013, available at: <http://stat.gov.pl/publikacje/> (accessed December 2014).

The right side of the parliament (including members of the ruling coalition, especially of the Peasant's Party) vocally point to the fact that both tradition and religion in Poland demand respect for women. However, their conception of respect focuses on old-fashioned courtesy rituals and disregards substantial issues, such as domestic violence and violence against women. MPs evidence this by saying that women are always treated with respect, allowed through the door before men and are kissed on the hand. More conservative MPs go further to claim that discussing violence in the family is in itself an attempt to destroy the traditional model of this institution. This is reiterated by SP MP Tadeusz Woźniak: (05.04.2013, 37, 239):

(...) violence in the family... We have no documents talking about violence in the workplace, on the street, in the stadiums, wherever, in any other place, we only have a law about violence in the family as the worst institution that is doomed to this negative phenomenon. Surely this is acting against the family, surely this is not the promotion of family. We do not speak of the grand tasks, aims, achievements, sacrifice in the family. What do we speak of? We speak of violence. (...) Please tell me, is it violence (...) when a parent says, even though maybe he shouldn't 'you shithead stop romping'⁷⁷. Beg your pardon, *he infringes* once on the child's dignity. 'Blue card'⁷⁸, police. This is what the law says. This law is harmful.⁷⁹

Economy and welfare

Economic arguments are prominent in debates that concern welfare and are employed in right-wing narratives that are most often directed against the ruling coalition and the government. The accusation within this discourse is that socially more permissive or liberal legislative proposals take away the attention from real problems, such as the balancing of the budget, unemployment, or poverty. This is a clear by-product and residue from the post-transformation primacy of neoliberal rhetoric which I discussed in the previous chapters. Above all, the conservative opposition MPs often ask how much certain changes in the legislation cost (such as the introduction of sexual education). The socially progressive legislative proposals are framed as taking attention and funds away from 'real problems'. For instance, the civil partnerships

⁷⁷ 'Romp' sounds like a mild offense – the Polish word used was 'dokazywać', which means to romp or to frolic. This shows what the MP considers children should be punished for.

⁷⁸ The so-called 'blue card' is a new procedural solution (introduced by the national program to fight violence), which is supposed to be a streamlined case file that the police have to create in any case of domestic violence or abuse that is reported.

⁷⁹ Emphasis in the quotes is my own.

legislation was called a ‘substitute topic’ by multiple opposition MPs during the plenary session of 24-25 January 2013. In general, the impression is that all ‘worldview matters’ (*kwestie światopoglądowe*) must be taking attention away from ‘real’ problems (such as unemployment).

On the other hand, proposals to curb more generous or permissive social welfare and family politics legislation are presented as responsibility and foresight in terms of the state budget. The reform of the pensions system and the raising of the retirement age is constructed as ‘the most difficult and most responsible legislative tasks of this parliamentary term’, which is indispensable (Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz 26.04.2012, 13, 128, 130) and momentous (Dariusz Rosati 26.04.2012, 13, 133). In keeping in line with the wider EU discourses justifying the cuts to welfare and social benefits through austerity programs, the pension reform is the ‘bitter pill’ that will save the country in the long run. Proponents of the reform present it from a market perspective: ‘from the point of view of market development the most important effect of raising the retirement age will be the stopping of falls in employment and consequently the strengthening of GDP growth factors’ (Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz 26.04.2012, 13, 132).

Coming from the side of PO and TR, there are arguments firmly based in competitive and market arguments, but also stressing the traditionally liberal need for citizens to have a freedom of choice and not to be forced to any social or economic solutions. This was the logic according to which parental leave was not assigned specifically to mothers and fathers, but gave options in who takes how much time with the child. Technically, fathers can take more time off for childcare, but without any obligation to do so not many do not (as opposed to the Swedish model, in which the missed ‘paternity leave’ is subtracted from the overall available childcare time). The debates on the proposed changes in foster care in 2012-2013 (see Table 5.5) show the absolute discursive unwillingness by MPs to ‘interfere into families’ and ‘parents’ right to raise their children as they want’. There is interesting interdiscursivity with ‘anti-communist’ discourses here. Namely, the MPs vocally proclaim fear of forceful family politics solutions, which are unequivocally labelled as ‘communist’ or ‘leftist’.

Demographic moral panic

Deputies are only interested in a particular type of family which reflects the supposed demographic interests of the nation. 'Demography is unrelenting', as the Minister of Labour and Social Policy claims (Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz 26.04.2012, 13, 129). Therefore, a strong family is seen as the basis for a strong society and nation. Demography is understood as destiny. Despite the previously shown monetary concerns to welfare, there is a strong realization that costs aimed at increasing birth rates in Poland are justified because they will be good for the economy in the future. Thus, the cost of spending in the field of family and welfare politics has to be an 'investment in the future'. All that is considered as beneficial to positive demographic trends should be promoted, although this also depends on the ideological background of the speaker.

Some deputies see as beneficial expenditures bolstering traditional marriage-family: 'The fact that the state protects marriage, woman and man, is in its interest, because it simply guarantees the biological reproduction of the nation' (Kazimierz Ziobro, 24.01.2013, 32, 181). Others argue for or against liberal health and reproductive services: 'Is it not absurd in the situation of a high drop in birth rates to promote contraceptives at all cost, even emergency contraception, by refunding it? (Jan Warzecha, 26.09. 2012, 22, 67); similarly: 'Today we have decreased demographic growth. This [abortion] is regular murder, let us call it what it is.' (Andrzej Duda, 26.09.2012, 22, 70). More liberal voices claim: 'This is the high-water mark of hypocrisy and of duplicity. (...) you have all spoken of the need to change the demographics in Poland. Then why did you not vote in favour of in vitro?' (Tomasz Kamiński, 26.09.2012, 22, 75).

Nonetheless, the dominant tone is alarmist about the state of Polish demography and the dominant discourse to address this state of affairs stresses the need to support the traditional family/marriage (as opposed to civil unions or same-sex relationships). Despite the general preference for non-interference of the state in the family, there are exhortations for state control over sexual behaviour and reproduction.

(...) demography is key and essential. (...) We are all aware that the birth rate in Poland is really very low. This is a catastrophe. The birth rate in Poland is 1.31. At the same time Polish women in the UK give birth, the rate there is 2.3-

2.5 child per woman. Is it possible that Polish women living in the UK are more attractive than Polish women in Poland? (Andrzej Romanek, 14.05.2013, 40, 6).

The concern over low birth rates and the discursive construction of the demographic crisis invoke moral and political anxieties about women's reproductive health rights, but also about how sexualities are deployed. This argument bases on the assumption that: 'It is in the interest of the state to support heterosexual marriages, which produce children and with that directly add to economic growth, because they are raising future tax payers and employees' (Beata Mazurek, 24.01.2013, 32, 176). Hence the neo-liberal market logic of strict budget spending (often implicit in the arguments used by MPs) is applied to maintain traditional gender relations within the family and society. This highlights the interdiscursivity between the narrative on economy and those of demography.

While it is no longer acceptable to advocate the male-breadwinner and female-homemaking model openly,⁸⁰ the underlying broader gendered division between the public and the private is still present in discursive constructions. When discussing maternity leave, MPs talk about 'employees', again only using the masculine noun ('*pracownik*'). The implied welfare model seems to be that of the dual breadwinner, which completely overlooks the reality that most women are secondary wage-earners, who end up quitting their jobs when their children are born, as well as the fact that Poland's pre-school and kindergarten situation is dire. There are not enough places for all children and parents are forced to pay to get a place, so the majority is discriminated against because of their lower economic status.

What subjects and values are being produced?

Values and anti-values

Within the social matrix of discourses in the area of family politics, the parliamentary discursive field displays intertextual and interdiscursive elements, which can be found

⁸⁰ This was still common in the 1990s with the restructuring policies and massive unemployment due to economic shock therapy policies.

in the construction of prescribed or denigrated values for the family. These are dominated by conservative hegemonic discourses, according to which any legislative change within the area of family politics comes down to an overturn of the healthy moral order and natural law allegedly codified in the constitution (the infamous Art.18, which I discussed in the beginning of this chapter). ‘The project [on proposed civil partnerships] entirely demolishes the hierarchy of values’ (Jacek Osuch, 26.09. 2012, 22, 65). As Krystyna Pawłowicz (PiS) argued: ‘The proposed law on conscious parenting and reproductive rights is a persistent attack on life and on family’ (26.09.2012, 22, 64). However, this narrative sees a stronger counter-discourse that proposes values traditionally associated with political and civic liberalism. Even so, the hegemonic conservative discourse depicts these as anti-values. While it sometimes admits that these anti-values may have noble intentions, the hegemonic discourse ultimately argues that they will bring about the collapse and decay of the ‘real’ values. Table 5.6 below shows the constructed ‘real’ and ‘anti-’ values in the parliamentary debates under analysis.

Table 5.6 Summary of the values constructed in the parliamentary discourses.

REAL VALUES	‘ANTI-VALUES’
(national) tradition	modernity (progress, Europeanization)
family (family-marriage)	diversity
conscience/morality	freedom of choice
responsibility	happiness (pleasure)
human life (since conception)	equality
freedom of speech	political correctness
respect for authority	tolerance

natural (God's) law	codified law
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(Source: own compilation).

The presented values and anti-values do not necessarily pose dichotomous or binary oppositions, but are usually evoked in bigger and often messier discursive groupings. The logic of Hansen's (2006) *linking* and *differentiation* does not work literally here – one side is not male and the other female. However, there is a significant derogatory implication of certain effeminacy in the column of 'anti-values', especially connected to ideas of tolerance and political correctness. The aim is to produce ideological ambivalence and perhaps some confusion, which in turn serves the purpose of hindering new progressive legislation. The tension between values/anti-values discourses emerges in all the debates under analysis. MPs on both sides of the divide argue that it is a war (Tadeusz Woźniak, 26.09.2012, 22, 69): 'Huntington's clash of civilizations as contrasted to the clash of the civilization of life and death are nothing, at least in this room' (Piotr Pyzik, 26.09.2012, 22, 80). While both sides demand respect for their own values, neither allows room for the negotiation between the two positions:

This is an attempt to dazzle us with the ideology of equality, which is in essence a dictatorship of relativism, a dictatorship of a minority over a majority (Marzena Machalek, 24.01.2013, 32, 178).

More respect for the human and for human life! (Andrzej Duda, 26.09.2012, 22, 70)

I have a conscience in contrast to the authors of this law (Bolesław Piecha, 26.09.2012, 22, 59).

The role of a civilized country built on Christian and humanist values is to defend the weak (Andrzej Dąbrowski, 26.09.2012, 22, 87).

Natural law is independent of us (Kazimierz Ziobro, 26.09.2012, 22, 95).

They [the citizens] will have the freedom of choice, a normal civilized choice (Dariusz Dziadzio, 26.09.2012, 22, 73).

Why do you [MPs in favour of the legislative proposal] want to decide for the citizens? (Marek Poznański, 26.09.2012, 22, 72).

No one, especially not the state should tell you [the citizens] what happiness looks like (Robert Biedroń, 24.01.2013, 32, 158).

Conversely, the proponents of the two discourses accuse each other of ‘politicizing’ or ‘ideologizing’ the debate:

We are debating using ideology and not the language of law (Robert Biedroń, 26.09.2012, 22, 72).

(...) in the matters of values, matters of conscience we believe that things must never be politicized, because this is a matter of everyone’s conscience and everyone has the individual rights (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 26.09.2012, 22, 61).

(...) the dispute is between nature and culture. Religion is not nature and does not constitute law (Piotr Bauć, 25.01.2013, 32, 243).

One of the main values constructed in the parliamentary debates is the ‘value of life’. The debates on family planning, termination of pregnancy, and assisted reproductive techniques especially display the main political cleavages in Poland. While most of PO, SLD, and TR deputies follow the ‘modernizing’, liberal, ‘European’ rhetoric, PiS, PSL (and some PO MPs) are proponents of the ultraconservative catholic discourse that is supposed to be a corrective to the increased pluralization and fragmentation of family arrangements, and reproductive choices (cf. Korolczuk 2013a). The Polish debates on IVF and abortion demonstrate that the religiously grounded opposition against reproductive rights relies heavily on the idea of ‘biovalue’, understood as the body, health and vitality of people that translates into the well-being of the collective nation (Rose and Novas 2005: 29-30). ‘Life’ or the ‘civilization of life’ refer to zygotes, embryos, and foetuses, but is rarely used with regards to children and never to adults.

Now everyone knows, science has proved it that the human, that life begins with the moment of conception. We are not interested in women’s bellies, we just defend life and we fight for life (Robert Telus, 26.09.2012, 22, 66).

This allows for the emotive construction of the rights of an embryo to ‘life’ as effectively overshadowing the desires and needs of women who may want to carry them or not, and men who want to become fathers through IVF for instance (cf. Korolczuk 2013a).

The constitution

Interestingly, the constitution is often brought up in the family and welfare field as an important value-bearer. Significantly, the supposed constitutionality of the proposed

legislation is used as an argument most frequently by the right-wing side of the parliament (for reasons I explained in the beginning of the chapter). Therefore, the constitutional theme is pervasively dominated by one conservative discourse claiming that any changes to the marriage-family field are persistent attacks or coups against the constitution, the whole codified legal order and thereby against the state as it currently exists. This discourse is present in particular in debates concerning family planning and abortion, sexual education and civil partnerships. As Waldemar Andzel (PiS) and Krystyna Pawłowicz (PiS) reiterate: ‘Why do you want to destroy the state by undermining the constitution namely article 18?’ (24.01.2013, 32, 242); ‘(...) by undermining article 18 of the constitution [the civil partnerships legislation] is an attempt at a constitutional coup’ (25.01.2013, 32, 183).

In this light, all legislation that is perceived as dangerous or subversive to the existing legal order is argued to be unconstitutional. This can be extended to most of the debates under analysis: ‘[sexual education classes are an] interference into parents’ rights, especially into the constitutionally guaranteed right to raise the child according to their own beliefs’ (Henryk Siedlaczek, 26.09.2012, 22, 70). Similarly, on abortion: ‘(...) the destruction of a life of a child in the embryonic phase infringes the constitution as well as other articles of criminal law.’ (Elżbieta Rafalska, 26.09.2012, 22, 75); and civil partnerships: ‘The proposed law [on civil partnerships] is radically contradictory both to nature and to the constitution’ (Krystyna Pawłowicz, 25.01.2013, 32, 163). The proponents of this discourse believe that all their intrinsic rights and values are entrenched in the constitution, which is under constant attack: ‘[The authors of the proposed legislation] are attempting a particular coup on the constitutional legal system and take a shot at the system of norms and values with regards to human sexuality that has been solidified through the ages’ (Tadeusz Woźniak, 24.01.2013, 32, 170).

The attempts of the left side of the parliament to construct a counter-discourse are based on the accusation of misinterpreting the constitution. Essentially, the constitution of the country becomes a matter of opinion of the MP: whatever does not suit their stance is deemed unconstitutional. ‘For you [addressing PiS and Solidarna Polska MPs] the constitution are only implementation mechanisms for the Bible, the

Vatican and the bishops' (Wincenty Elsner, 24.01.2013, 32, 165). They have not managed to destabilize the prominence of the 'constitutional defence' discourse. PiS, SP, PSL and often PO MPs repeatedly make claims about protecting the constitution and are able to add and reinterpret it unchallenged: 'The legalization of homosexual relationships is contrary to the current law, its promotion is forbidden' (Krystyna Pawłowicz PiS, 24.01.2013, 32, 163).⁸¹ PiS, SP, and the other opposition parties talk about constitutional defence when it suits them; at other times they talk about God's law (natural law) even as opposed to the constitutional legislative order (as I highlighted in table 5.6).

Europe

One of the most prominent non-conservative discourses that has managed to obtain a degree of importance and even dominance concerns Europe, as an ideal or metaphor for modernity, progress, and development. Within this discourse SLD, TR and PO accuse the right-wing and conservative forces in Poland of being 'hordes of catholic Taliban' (Armand Ryfiński, 26. 09. 2012, 22, 56) and that they 'remain the representatives of the church [slang word '*purpurat*' – the purple ones], of ignorance, and of backwardness [and] have forgotten that [they] are supposed to express the will of a modern, democratic society.' (Dariusz Dziadzio, 24.10.2012, 24, 244). The users of this discourse claim that PiS, SP, but also parts of PO and PSL are dragging the country backward, away from Europe, which is built up to mean modernity, civilization and progress. As seen in the previous chapters, this perceived backwardness and 'lagging behind' Europe in terms of modernization might be interpreted as a specific post-state socialist form of a postcolonial condition. This thinking takes for granted 'Europe' (or wider 'West') as the only known term of reference for the peripheral position of Poland.

This discourse emerges clearly in debates on legislative proposals that are considered progressive in terms of women's, sexual, and minority rights. Examples of this

⁸¹ Poland has no laws criminalizing or outlawing homosexuality.

discourse show that the proponents weave in expectations and values into key words like '21st century', 'Europe', and 'civilization':

We are in the Middle Ages. When will we have the 21st century in this [plenary] room? (Maciej Banaszak, 26.09.2012, 22, 72).

We live in the 21st century. I have no doubt that the state should be comfortable for its citizens (Joanna Kluzik-Rostkowska, 24.01.2013, 32, 162).

A modern state should simply support [civil partnerships] (Robert Biedroń, 24.01.2013, 32, 158).

You [addressing PO] look at Europe you count the euros, but you have not learned tolerance and equality. (...) There, in Europe, they have civil partnerships despite the threatening murmurs of bishops in Ireland, in Spain (Wincenty Elsner, 24.01.2013, 32, 165).

This is Europe (...) this is the 21st century and a free country (Wincenty Elsner, 24.01.2013, 32, 165).

The 'modernizing Europe' discourse calls on the parliament to catch up to the 'West' and to adjust to what is or is perceived as a European norm: 'What is also very important about this law is that we want Poland to draw nearer to highly developed countries. The possibility of terminating pregnancy is a *European standard*' (Armand Ryfiński, 26.09.2012, 22, 56). At times, Poland's backwardness is presented as a source of shame and depreciation in the regional and global context: 'Europe is laughing at you' (Armand Ryfiński, 26. 09. 2012, 22, 56). More progressive legislation is presented as a gauge for modernity and democracy: '(...) modern law worthy of a democratic country' (Marek Balt, 26.09.2012, 22, 62).

The flip side of this discourse is the narrative that, exactly because this is the civilized 21st century and we have modernity and civilization, this calls for more conservative values:

We live in the 21st century (...) and yet we murder children in the 30th week of pregnancy because they are ill (Bartosz Kownacki, 26.09.2012, 22, 83).

The 20th century, which was characterized by the lack of respect for the human being and for the whole of creation, is over (Andrzej Dąbrowski, 26.09.2012, 22, 87).

Eugenics was the shame of the 20th century. It is time to end it in the 21st (Anna Paluch, 26.09.2012, 22, 90).

The conservative response is emotively formulated as the concern about influence from outside, especially European moral decay. There is a perception that Europe (by the doings of the EU and other international institutions) can force certain legislative solutions that are not appreciated or do not conform to constructed national traditions. Again, here we can see a hint of the postcolonial discourse being used for a nationalist and conservative cause: '[c]an the European Union or some other international organization force Poland to register homosexual couples and to allow them privileges?' (Tadeusz Woźniak, 25.01.2013, 32, 170).

National, catholic, nuclear family

Overall, all social and family topics in the parliament are constructed as difficult, often with the explicit intention of arguing for the status quo. 'This is a very difficult subject, which we should really take up deeply and substantially. This will remain a topic that will be divisive in our society.' (Anna Bańkowska, 26.09.2012, 22, 76). There is an inherent fear of infringing on anything considered as belonging to the private sphere and seen as in the least bit controversial: '(...) the debate concerns a very delicate sensitive topic' (Vice-speaker Jerzy Wenderlich SLD on abortion 24.10.2012, 24, 241); '(...) what you have been saying about a difficult, delicate topic' (Donald Tusk on civil partnerships 25.01.2013, 32, 241). Judging from the above discussion of discursive fields within family politics, it seems that the most dominant feature of the Polish family is that it is permanently threatened. 'The family is currently under threat in Poland' (Robert Telus, 24.01.2013, 32, 186). It is endangered by abortion, by civil partnerships, by the interference into the family through attempts to enforce paternity leave, and anti-violence legislation. As we have seen, the Polish family as constructed by the parliamentary debates is a married, opposite-sex couple with children: 'I would like to remind (...) that the closest family consists of dad, mom and kids, not Mr and Mr or Ms and Ms' (Marek Matuszewski, 24.01.2013, 32, 183).

Any other forms of family life are not only not accepted but not even considered 'families'. The usefulness and acceptability of families is judged by its ability to bring children – new citizens, new members of the nation, new tax payers. If a family is

valued by the number of children it brings to the nation, then abortion is considered a highest evil: ‘A nation that allows the killing of unborn children is condemning itself to die off’ (Abraham Godson, 26.09.2012, 22, 64). Conversely, couples or families that do not fulfil the family-marriage requirement (as discussed above) are unwanted and harmful to society. ‘Society cannot sponsor the sweet life of non-durable empty relationships of people, who bring no benefits to it’ (Krystyna Pawłowicz, 24.01.2013, 32, 163). This completely overlooks the reality that as much as one third of all children in Poland are currently born outside of formal marriage (either civil or religious).⁸²

How is truth being created?

Deputies draw on specific authority figures to support their statements. There are several sources that the MPs drawn on to legitimize their arguments. However, there is only one authority that is seen by all as unquestioned and impossible to undermine – the former pope John Paul II. He is quoted by all political groups in the parliament and his name appears in all the debates under analysis in the topic of family politics. He is referred to as: ‘none other than the blessed John Paul II’ (Arkadiusz Mularczyk, 26.09.2012, 22, 81); ‘our great compatriot [no name given]’ (Bartosz Kownacki, 26.09.2012, 22, 83); ‘(...) our great compatriot, the blessed John Paul II’ (Marek Balt, 26.09.2012, 22, 86), ‘(...) the Holy Father’ (Adam Rogacki, 26.09.2012, 22, 96); ‘distinguished Pole, pope John Paul II’ (Bartosz Kownacki, 24.10.2012, 24, 242); ‘the unquestioned authority Karol Wojtyła, later pope John Paul II’ (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 24.01.2013, 32, 167). There is no other authority outside politics that is quoted more often and more profusely than John Paul II. It appears that in order to be legitimate as an MP there is a need to reference or base oneself in catholic sources. Unsurprisingly, this is done most often by right-wing deputies: they even refer to the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the ‘Holy Father pope Benedict XVI’ (Krystyna Pawłowicz, 24.01.2013, 32, 165). However, also former ‘communist’ MPs

⁸² According to the Main Statistical Office yearbooks for 2013 and 2014, accessed at: <http://stat.gov.pl/publikacje/> (accessed April 2016).

find it necessary to quote St. Augustine and the Council of Trident (Ryszard Kalisz, 24.01.2013, 32, 168).

On the other hand, there are several personalities constructed as evil-doers and negative examples. They usually include left-associated intellectuals, writers or artists: 'the guru of left-wing and leftist philosophers, Mr Jürgen Habermas' (Bolesław Piecha, 26.09.2012, 22, 60).

For you, Prof Peter Singer would probably be a guru, surely you know Deanne Wells, who believes that abortion is allowed at any moment until it is admitted that the child is useful' (Bolesław Piecha, 26.09.2012, 22, 59).

Conservative MPs sometimes cite non-religious figures who have very conservative positions on selected topics in order to show that their arguments find resonance also in secular circles:

If we are to pelt each other with quotations, then I send you to the quotes of people who criticized abortion from atheist or humanist positions such as Pier Paolo Pasolini, Oriana Fallaci and Giuliano Ferrara. If it is about a concrete quote, I can reference the American feminist Rebecca Walker who said that feminists are wrong to say that abortion causes no harm (Maciej Orzechowski, 26.09.2012, 22, 74).

The discursive political culture of the *Sejm* is extremely catholicized and a lot of the symbolism used draws on religion: for instance, the use of the word 'amen' instead of 'yea' or 'yes' on multiple occasions by right-wing MPs, but also phrases like 'God forbid' (Ryszard Kalisz multiple times, 24.01.2013, 32, 174, 193) by apparently left-wing deputies. There is also constant mention and reference to catholicism or the church: 'I would like to point out that the way we are working here is being monitored by the public opinion and by the Polish episcopate, who not long ago has issued an appeal not to break the consciences of MPs' (Arkadiusz Mularczyk, 24.10.2012, 24, 227); 'While we are sitting here our parliamentary chapel is holding Eucharistic adoration' (Andrzej Dąbrowski 10.10.2012, 23, 18). Also, there is an understanding that something like 'natural law' or 'God's law' underlies all social and family issues: 'The Decalogue is the basis for all lawyers.' (Kazimierz Ziobro 24.01.2013, 32, 181). The anticlerical counter-discourse or even secularism are not prominent and are again put forward only by the liberal deputies (former TR): 'I would like to remind you that

this is the plenary session of the *Sejm* of the Republic of Poland and not a rosary prayer meeting or a meeting of the episcopate.’ (Sławomir Kopyciński, 24.10.2012, 24, 242).

Paradoxically, apart from the apparent catholicism, sexist comments, jokes and taunts are also ever present: ‘Ms Pawłowicz, you give birth and then we talk.’ (Jacek Kwiatkowski, 26.09.2012, 22, 77); ‘Give birth! (..) Give birth! (...) Give birth instead of yelling.’ (Jacek Kwiatkowski to Krystyna Pawłowicz, 26.09.2012, 22, 78); ‘I have a weak spot for you...’ (Vice-speaker Cezary Grabarczyk to Marzena Wróbel 24.01.2013, 32, 177). Similarly, deputy Piotr Bauć repeatedly referred to his female peers, with whom he disagreed as ‘my beloved madam professor’ (*kochana pani profesor*) (22.06.2013, 44, 266) or ‘beloved ladies’ (*Kochane Panie Profesor, Posel Pawłowicz i Pani Posel Wróbel!*) (22.06.2013, 44, 265).⁸³ By singling out female MPs, he shortened the linguistic distance between them, increasing familiarity and thereby infantilizing them; this is particularly explicit in the very formal setting of the Polish parliament and the formal nature of the Polish language.

Moreover, Robert Kropiwnicki (24.09.2014, 75, 103), while propounding his progressive views said: ‘social and cultural roles change because 200 or 300 years ago, it was unimaginable that so many *beautiful and smart ladies* would sit in parliament’. Thus, hegemonic gender constructions are perpetuated through a certain use of language and grammar.

What can and cannot be said?

The Polish *Sejm* displays traits of hegemonic masculinity, that is, anything masculine or male is hegemonic. This is so pervasive that it is rendered an invisible norm. There is a tacit dominance and acceptance of male-dominated structures that presents itself as silence on gender. Masculinity is institutionally constructed as a standard and blueprint for conduct in the Polish parliament. The domination of the masculine gender in the ‘universal function’, referring to general meanings in both sexes, is prevalent.

⁸³ *Kochany/kochana* is a term of endearment in Polish that is much more informal and personal than ‘dear’ (*drogi/droga*), which would still be too familiar in a parliamentary setting.

Hence, masculinity is not just a trait attributed in gender, but an almost moral norm, indicating a degree of normality and simply ‘how things are’ (cf. Kronsell 2006: 109). While pretending to be ‘gender-neutral’ the informal institutional workings and discourses of the *Sejm* define the specific and conservative roles of women and men towards the fulfilment of what is considered the common good of the society. Importantly, there is no significant difference in male or female discourses within parliament; as many feminist scholars have shown, there is no proof of women acting for or speaking for other women.

Conclusions

This case study explored the political discourses on the topics of family and welfare, a highly relevant and gendered policy field. The debates on family politics are a sphere where contradictory discourses concerning family, economy, the body, and subjectivity or citizenship intersect and interact. Perhaps, it is even more evident in the post-transformation context of Poland, where already in the beginning of the 1990s heated debates especially on issues such as abortion, domestic violence, and *in vitro* fertilization have become an important part of the process of contestation and legitimization of political authority (cf. Korolczuk 2013a). The effects of the political and economic transformation (as discussed in chapter 4) are clear in the contemporary Polish political discourses. The social and cultural changes of the 1990s influenced the ideologies and practice of care and family sphere. There is a clear stress on pro-natalist (or nativist) thinking, which ties the future of the Polish nation (not state, not society, not people, but nation) to population growth, thereby justifying the interest and control of reproductive and sexual health.

The dominant, even hegemonic, discourses in the field of family and welfare politics are heteronormative, come from catholic church teachings, and stress marriage as means for procreation, thereby guaranteeing the continuity of the Polish nation. As the opening quote suggested, all other types of relationships are not seen as worthy of being called family and hence vilified (in opposition to Polish law). Motherhood is the determinant marker of female identity and the main formula for women’s participation in the national collective (cf. Janion 1996; Hryciuk and Korolczuk 2013).

Motherhood, and especially pregnancy, are romanticized (while fatherhood is hardly remembered). The absolute command to sacrifice for ‘life’ (meaning embryo or foetus) is a permanent component of debates on family planning. Therefore, abortion is seen as absolute evil (hence showing an interdiscursivity with religious rhetoric) and constructed as criminal. Furthermore, women are assumed to be the caregivers in the family; this fits well both within neoliberal and conservative-catholic perspectives.

Debates on domestic violence construct a patriarchal hierarchy in the family, where men are at the top (but their role as chief perpetrators of violence is ignored), women must sacrifice themselves for the family members (both older and younger) and children are at the bottom. In this context, the dominant discourses raise economic issues for two main purposes: either to claim that passing more socially liberal bills (e.g. civil partnerships) takes time and resources from ‘real problems’; or to justify funding cuts to welfare or legislating austerity measures.

The discursive subjects produced are tropes of ‘emphasized femininity’ (Connell 1987) and hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1987, 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). They pertain to gender-conforming, able-bodied, cisgender, heterosexual individuals of reproductive age, who are useful for the nation on one hand, and to the economy on the other. Except for specific dedicated debates (like the pension reform), issues of people with disabilities, older people, or other non-binary people are invisible and non-existent. As the opening quote suggests, there is only one proscribed family model in Poland. It is exclusivist and does not make room for diversity (even though the Polish law does). It also completely ignores the reality of Polish family life: children born outside of marriage, single parenting (motherhood mostly), divorce rates, and the existence of patchwork families, which are very often same-sex because they include mothers, grandmothers, and aunts, as primary caregivers to dependants (children and the elderly).

These discursive constructions lead to the creation of ultraconservative values and liberal ‘anti-values’, with the being presented as virtues (national tradition, heteronormativity, natural law, etc.) keeping in line with the national-catholic camp outlined in chapter 4; and the latter with the ‘modernist’ one. Legislative proposals

perceived as opposing the 'real values' are sweepingly branded as anti-constitutional reducing the debate to yes-no level. The main liberal discourse centres around the concepts of 'European standards' and 'modernity' or 'progress' and follows the self-colonizing logic outlined in the conceptual part of the dissertation. The proponents of this discourse (mainly TR, SLD, and some PO deputies) see inferiority in the Polish situation, focusing on the need to 'catch up to Europe at all costs'. This is met by an equally strong counter-narrative arguing that traditional 'our Polish' values must be defended from foreign unnatural and immoral influences. These discourses are strongly co-constitutive and play off each other cyclically.

The above dominant 'truths' are constructed and legitimized through references to catholic authority figures, most notably the late Polish pope John Paul II. The choice of a gendered language also plays an important role in the construction of hegemonic masculinity in the *Sejm*. Hence, the case study has shown that the aim of family and welfare politics in Poland is the unpaid reproduction of the catholic nation through heteronormative family units. The parliamentary hegemonic masculinity has very specific characteristics. It is a discursive and institutional construct that it is both a product and a producer of catholic and ultraconservative worldviews. Any divergence from the 'natural norm' is perceived as subversive and threatening. The next chapter broadens the analysis to debates concerning the construction of the nation.

Chapter 6: Building the nation

*'Just don't order me to die, (...)
don't order me to fight, don't order me to perish,
Poland, don't ask my blood!
(...) Sorry, Poland
(...) Better a living citizen, than a dead hero.'*
Maria Peszek⁸⁴

This chapter presents the second case study of the thesis. It discusses the gendered construction of parliamentary debates in the topic I defined as 'building the nation'. This area has been conceptualized as the area of politics that pertains to questions of national subjectivity, citizenship, and national celebration. In practice, the chapter looks at parliamentary debates that discussed national commemorations, national symbols and important symbols of nationality and citizenship (coat of arms and passports). It also analyses how the *Sejm* defines the Polish national collective with reference to the 'others' (particularly the legislative proposals on national minorities and foreigners working and living in Poland, and the European refugee crisis) and thereby creates discursively the Polish nation. As a result of this broad understanding of the focus area, I also include parliamentary debates on defence and the army, as well as education (specifically history and Polish language classes in schools).

This chapter is an attempt at unpacking and showing the gendered constructions of the Polish national discourse that Maria Peszek is rebelling against in the opening quote. The purpose is to expose how deputies construct discursively a particular model of subjectivity, which shapes people's mentalities and practices concerning what it means to be Polish, by discussing citizenship and identity in Poland. The main questions addressed are: what constitutes national subjectivity according to the MPs? How is subjectivity constructed discursively in the parliament? How are the debates under analysis gendered? What do the official commemorations say about the model of memory and citizenship and thereby subjectivity for Poland? What do they reveal

⁸⁴ Excerpt from the 2012 song 'Sorry Polsko' by Maria Peszek. The translation is my own; text in the original: 'Tylko nie kaź mi umierać/ tylko nie kaź, nie kaź mi/ Nie kaź walczyć, nie kaź ginąć./ nie chciej Polsko mojej krwi/ (...) Sorry Polsko,/ (...) Lepszy żywy obywatel, niż martwy bohater'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtDFT34JGN8> (accessed November 2016).

about the model of masculinity and femininity? I argue that MPs discursively build the Polish nation by prescribing a subjectivity model that entails specific masculinity, catholicism, and nationalism. This construction excludes not only foreigners, but also Polish citizens that do not fulfil the above criteria – non-conforming women, non-patriotic dissenters, and ‘malcontents’, atheists, and left-wing people, for instance, fall out of this hegemonic narrative.

The chapter begins with a discussion of ‘nationalism’ and ‘nation’ in the Polish context. It then provides an overview of the agenda points and agents of discourse in the Polish parliament that are relevant to the case study. Subsequently, I divide the analysis into specific discursive fields guided by CDA questions from chapter 3 and go on by conducting the analysis within these fields: Who is speaking? What/who is being talked about? What subjects and values are produced? How is truth created? What can and cannot be said? Finally, I look at the citizenship and subjectivity model that the *Sejm* is constructing for the society.

The analysis in the previous chapter has demonstrated that one of the founding tenets of the discursive construction of Polish family policy was the role of the loving, nuclear, patriarchal family unit in the production of a healthy nation. The images of masculinity, femininity and sexuality were constructed in the parliamentary debates with reference to the ‘nation’. While the word ‘nationalism’ (*nacjonalizm*) itself in Polish has unequivocally negative connotations, the concepts of ‘nation’ (*naród*), ‘national’ (*narodowy*) do not. According to the Polish historical and intellectual tradition, ‘nationalism’ refers to the National Democratic movement (*Endecja*) of the interwar period, which postulated a catholic Greater Poland, based on ethno-national chauvinism, national megalomania, aggressive anti-Semitism, a fascination with Italian Fascism and advocated a Poland with polonized, or ethnically cleansed minorities (between 1918 and 1939 non-Polish ethnic minorities made up around 30% of the population) (Graff 2013). For this reason, the Polish mainstream makes a distinction between ‘patriotism’ and ‘nationalism’, with the former being desirable and the latter an aberration. Arguably, in the mid-2010s the distinction started to blur and ‘nationalism’ began to lose its pejorative meaning. As the opening quote suggests,

there are specific expectations that come with belonging to the Polish national collective.

Who is speaking?

Similarly to the family and welfare area, the discourses are divided along party lines, with PO, TR, and SLD standing for the neoliberal camp, and PiS, SP, and PSL representing the national-catholic camp. There is however much more coherence and interdiscursivity among the deputies than it appears at first glance. There are no ‘go-to’ people in this topic and all parties seem to be equally vocal in the issues discussed. Moreover, the differences between the parties only vary in terms of the intensity of national and patriotic feelings proclaimed – with more pronounced nationalist discourses on the right side of the parliament and somewhat less nationalist on the left and in the centre. There is again a different understanding of ‘Europe’ and international obligations within the neoliberal camp. However, with regards to patriotism and nation, there is not much diversity between the government and the opposition. Therefore, the substance of the arguments is similar on all sides. The MPs see the composition and duties of the Polish subject-citizens along almost identical lines. Both female and male MPs are involved in the debates on the nation.

What is talked about?

The tables below provide an overview of the specific debates relevant to the area of the construction of the nation. The analysed debates (parliamentary agenda points – see Table 6.7) include parliamentary resolutions, different stage readings of legislative proposals, reports from committee proceedings, and voting sessions. Overall, I investigated 170 individual parliamentary agenda points (plenary debates) for the seventh parliamentary term (2011-2015) and singled out for in-depth analysis the discussions outlined in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Summary of the number of agenda points under analysis divided by topic (2011-2015).

Topic	Number of agenda points
Commemoration of individuals	45
Commemoration of historic events	40
Foreigners, refugees, and ethnic minorities	19
Veterans, oppositionists, ‘victims of communist repression’ and the ‘Committee for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation’	16
Defence, army, and military service	13
Establishment of days in honour of groups/ideas	10
National symbols and citizenship	8
Expressions of international solidarity or concern	8
Acknowledgement for important institutions	5
Education: Polish language and history	4
Legislative acts naming institutions/buildings	2
Smolensk plane crash of 2010 ⁸⁵	2

(Source: own compilation).

I clustered the above debates around the themes of national symbols, national obligations, and domestic and international commitments.

National symbols

Symbols are typically associated with national identity and national tradition. The debates within this field focused on the change of the use of the national coat of arms (white eagle with a crown on red background) on the t-shirts of the national representations in sports and on new passports, as well as the general law concerning the use of national symbols. The largest debate was the result of a heated public discussion following an international football match in 2011, in which the Polish male

⁸⁵ This is the plane crash that killed president Lech Kaczyński along with over 90 other high-ranking state officials.

football representation played without the eagle on their t-shirts. This caused so much concern that the parliament decided to change the law and make wearing the eagle mandatory. MPs focused on how they were answering ‘outraged cries’ from the general public and society at large that apparently wanted this issue resolved. Overall, there was not much variety when it came to the meaning and importance of national symbols for Polish identity among MPs. From all sides of the parliament, they expressed pride of and loyalty to the symbol explaining its meaning by providing interpretations of its significance:

(...) the eagle [in the diminutive form – *orzełek*] on the breasts of many sportspeople has been on the one hand an award, an honour, and on the other hand – the expression of integration with the nation, it was at the same time a type of motivating factor for sports rivalry (Krzysztof Łaszkiewicz, Secretary of State in the President’s Chancellery, 21.12.2011, 4, 39).

The symbols of the Polish nation and state moulded and solidified through generations, especially the White Eagle, unite all Poles in the country and abroad. They are surrounded with reverence and respect, just as we should respect and revere any national representation. Everything that historically happened outside of the country, occurred under the coat of arms and the standard of the White Eagle (Franciszek Stefaniuk, 21.12.2011, 4, 43).⁸⁶

The missing eagle was a perceived dishonour or even an attempt at dismantling Polish identity:

[The team played] without the symbol, which has been associated with our pride, our national identity that led us to victory and gathered us around itself and mobilized in defeat since forever (Andrzej Biernat, 21.12.2011, 4, 47).

[The authorities that removed the eagle coat of arms from t-shirts] saw nothing wrong (...) nothing that would breach our national interest and the need to identify with people who speak the same language, breathe the same air, gather underneath the white-red standard, who in defence of the White Eagle sacrificed the highest value – their lives (Andrzej Biernat, 21.12.2011, 4, 47).

These utterances give the impression that the issue was a matter of life and death and not a football game. The MPs seem to be giving similar value to representing Poland in sports as to conducting war under the Polish banner. Interestingly, a lot can be made

⁸⁶ Capitalization original in the parliamentary transcript.

of the fact that the *Sejm*-wide debate focused on the male national team (hardly anyone even knows that there is a female football team). It also points to the importance of football as a mass sport used to mobilize masses on the one hand and, on the other hand, to depoliticize the youth (young men especially) by turning their attention from issues such as economic inequality to tribal competition (Perelman 2012). As Marc Perelman (2012) argued, international competitive sport (and football in particular) has been used as a national fetish that helps governments in the pursuit of racist and ethno-nationalist agendas. (Male) international competitive football has arguably taken the place of wars in mobilizing nationalist support. The way Polish MPs compare sport with war seems to support this claim – both are constructed as a ‘men’s thing’.⁸⁷

MPs from virtually all parties in the *Sejm* spoke in a similar emotional and passionate tone about the missing eagle as an assault on ‘Polishness’: ‘(...) for some bizarre whim will deprive us [*obedrzeć* – literally: ‘skin someone’] of what is most valuable’ (Andrzej Biernat, 21.12.2011, 4, 41). They also used a metaphoric language to convey the importance of the coat of arms: ‘we believe the White Eagle will give wings to our representatives in the stadiums’ (Tomasz Garbowski, 21.12.2011, 4, 43). ‘Every child wants to play [sports] with the eagle on its chest’ (Grzegorz Raniewicz, 21.12.2011, 4, 46).

National obligations: debt and responsibility

The hegemonic discourse constructing national subjectivity suggests that Poles (elites and masses alike) owe a debt to the dead and in general to those who sacrificed themselves ‘for Poland’ (or who were sacrificed, to be more accurate). This comes across clearly in the debates commemorating Second World War events, ‘communist repressions’, as well as when honouring particular individuals. The debt is paid in the form of memory, but also appreciation, gratitude and a call to follow the example. However, this debt is owed only to specific dead, who are constructed as martyrs and victims.

⁸⁷ According to Perelman (2012) countries that host Olympic games and international football championships pursue nationalist agendas and try to boost the athletic results through cheating and doping, in order to strengthen their national collectives through victories.

We, Poles, who live today in a free country, in a free Poland, owe an enormous debt to them [Poles living abroad due to Second World War resettlements and ethnic cleansing campaigns] and we have a duty to act in any possible way, so that the dream of thousands of our compatriots to see the fatherland, to return to Poland could finally come true (Robert Tyszkiewicz, 11.01.2012, 5, 43).

Today we pay tribute to them [Home Army soldiers] and their fealty to the Fatherland is an inspiration for us and a source of national pride. It is our duty to pass on the memory of the Home Army to the next generations of Poles (Resolution commemorating the establishment of the Home Army, 17.02.2012, 8, 239).⁸⁸

The values lauded by the dominant discourse consist of bravery and martyrdom (to the point of reality-defying daring that meant taking political and military risks that had no hope of success), sacrifice, honour, (national) dignity, devotion to church and catholic religion. All of them are unequivocally connected to the masculine ideal and to the male hero and role model. By commemorating and celebrating almost exclusively male figures, MPs use the strategies of linking the values that they cherish to the masculine gender (cf. Hansen 2006).

Paradoxically, it is never explicitly verbalized what the constructed historical debt should make Poles do and what it consists of. For the most part, it involves a sense of guilt, which is meant to mobilize emotionally Poles and strengthen their bond to the state. Certainly, there is no call to arms in a specific contemporary context. Nonetheless, this debt and the proclaimed need to follow the example of the dead heroes and martyrs implies that there is a need to die or sacrifice oneself for something. This idea also implies that there would or will be a need for such loss, which fosters a siege mentality. Ultimately, it places the value of Polish lives quite low. The widespread use of the axiom '*Bóg, honor, Ojczyzna*', gives a clue about the values for which Poles should sacrifice themselves. This is one of the most famous Polish mottos of all times – it means 'God, honour, fatherland', and has been a rallying cry and a justification for actions of politicians and statesmen for decades. Currently, it is also the motto of the Polish armed forces, it is supposed to point to what the army is fighting

⁸⁸ In short, the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*) was the underground Polish army during the Second World War that answered to the Polish government in exile in London.

for. Again, this is seen as a set of values that Polish fighters, male fighters, soldiers, oppositionists and insurrectionists fight for. It is exclusionary and hierarchical.

Furthermore, the analysed debates also expose clearly and explicitly what the MPs consider as Poland's mission: 'What is Poland's mission in history? Zygmunt Krasiński was not afraid of this question. The grand duty of our nation was to imbue collective life with Christian values'⁸⁹ (Barbara Bubula, 17.02.2012, 8, 259). This argument goes back to the 19th century notion of Poland as the 'Christ of Nations' that would die to save the rest of Europe either from 'pagans' (during Turkish invasions) or the 'Asian horde' (Russians) (Porter 2000; Prizel 1998). The level of racism and chauvinism implicit in this belief is never explicitly articulated, but cannot be underestimated.

The debt of the Poles is not only owed to the masses that died 'for freedom'. A similar logic is also applied to individuals who are venerated (both lay and religious) by MPs.

The proposed legislation is a special ideological testament of Mr Maciej Płażyński, the former Speaker of the Sejm, a statesman, a noble human, tragically deceased on the way to the Katyn graves – the holy place on that "inhuman soil".⁹⁰ How many human beings were claimed by that soil! How much sweat and Polish blood soaked into it throughout decades and centuries until now. It would be a dishonour to oppose the oeuvre, which, if only in part, may assuage the Polish bad conscience and allow our ill-used compatriots [the repatriants] to live in Poland as our neighbours and awaited friends' (Tadeusz Woźniak, 11.01.2012, 5, 50).⁹¹

According to this understanding, the blood of the dead weighs on Poles and obliges them to act according to what the deceased would have wanted. In this particular debate, the repayment of the debt involves the continuation of the ideas and legacy of the deceased: 'enabling their [Poles living abroad due to Second World War resettlements] return to the fatherland is our moral duty' (Robert Tyszkiewicz, 11.01.2012, 5, 43). Nonetheless, this is a somewhat precarious logical and

⁸⁹ Zygmunt Krasiński (1812-1859) was one of the poets and writers who were commemorated by the *Sejm* in the 2011-2015 term. He is considered to be one of the Polish 'great' national poets. He was a Romanticist and thus associated to the 19th century ethos of national revival.

⁹⁰ 'Inhuman soil' refers to Russia (or the Soviet Union), even though it is not named.

⁹¹ Maciej Płażyński was one of the 90 members of the Polish elite who died in April 2010 in a plane crash in Smolensk, Russia on the way to the commemoration site of the Katyn massacre of 1940.

psychological construction that resonates with the right-wing segment of the parliament. Due to the fact that these MPs invoke the memory of the dead according to their own needs, they ‘use’ them quite freely: ‘in the name of the memory of the valued and the name of those who rest in nameless graves [archaic and poetic: *mogiła*] as well as – before all – those who were denied graves’ (Tadeusz Woźniak, 11.01.2012, 5, 51).

Again, as in the previous discursive fields there is interdiscursive overlap when it comes to the figure of the former pope. Poles have a debt to him too:

We, Poles, have a huge debt to pay off to John Paul II (...) every day. Independently of our faith, our creed, independently of our worldview, each and every one of us owes a piece of our current freedom in this room and outside it, to John Paul II (Iwona Śledzińska-Katarasińska, 24.04.2014, 66, 159).

Therefore, ‘(...) everyone has the duty to express gratitude and respect to John Paul II’ (Iwona Śledzińska-Katarasińska, 24.04.2014, 66, 159). MPs construct the former pope as part of national identity and many *lieux de memoire* (cf. Nora 1989) commemorate him all over the country – just as for the Katyn massacre. Thus, judging from the parliamentary debates, Poles need to constantly revere and live under the shadow of their dead, whose actions are selectively reinterpreted for current political goals and shape national citizenship.

Table 6.8 Historic events commemorated by the parliament by type (2011-2015).

Uprisings/insurgencies	7
Constitution of governments and other political events	6
WWII episodes of ethnic cleansing	6
WWII massacres	4
WWII resistance and military groups	4
Battles	3
Establishment of institutions	3
Establishment of diplomatic relations	2
Anniversary of major industrial/development projects	2
Territorial acquisitions	2
Abolition of a commemorative event	2
Membership in international organizations	1
Voting rights	1
Christianising missions	1

(Source: own compilation).

Domestic fears and international commitments

In the parliamentary debates on international obligations concerning the provision of legal guarantees for migrants and asylum for refugees, both the PO and opposition MPs agreed on the need to transpose EU and international laws into Polish legislation (Anna Nemś, Bogdan Rzońca, Artur Ostrowski 11.06.2015, 94, 221-224). In general, the stress was less on moral or ethical considerations and more on international legal commitments and pragmatic reasons. ‘Turning our backs on our partners, on countries that are today the goal of migration (...), goes against the values of solidarity and can cost us the loss of their solidarity in matters we care about’ (Grzegorz Schetyna 16.09.2015, 100, 6). Humanitarian calls for help were mainly presented by the Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz (16.09.2015, 100, 3-5), when she reported to the *Sejm* on the refugee crisis in September 2015. Some PO, SLD, and TR MPs followed this line, basing their arguments in christian and ‘evangelical rhetoric’ (Rafał Grupiński, Abraham Godson, Tadeusz Iwiński).

Nonetheless, the majority of deputies advised caution: ‘The geopolitical situation of our region is becoming recently increasingly complicated and characterized by uncertainty (...) we are not a desert island. And we – as deputies and as a nation, must not forget’ (Miroslaw Pawlak 11.06.2015, 94, 223). A perception of risk and threat was thus created. The danger lay in inviting someone to stay permanently: ‘It is evident that this is not just about inviting a guest to your home, but a long and arduous procedure’ (Miroslaw Pawlak 11.06.2015, 94, 223). Deputies presented fear as a natural reaction to the presence of refugees.

Notions of the primacy of security issues were brought into the debates: ‘I would like to highlight that in all the undertaken actions, security is the highest priority for us [the government]’ (Teresa Piotrowska 16.09.2015, 100, 7). The ‘yes, but...’ attitude was reinforced by questioning the identity of the migrants and especially of the refugees. ‘Who can guarantee that refugees are really mistreated and oppressed? (...) who will verify the real reasons of abandoning their homeland?’ (Miroslaw Pawlak 11.06.2015, 94, 223). Despite the initial acceptance and lip service paid to the need of welcoming refugees based on EU agreements, refugees were quickly dehumanized in the debates and presented as ‘a wave that will flood *us* from countries of a *different faith*, where there are huge conflicts’ (Marek Matuszewski 11.06.2015, 94, 226).⁹²

Similarly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Grzegorz Schetyna (16.09.2015, 100, 5), talked of a problem with ‘illegal migration’. By stressing the different faith and their ‘illegality’ (which implied criminality) refugees were also *othered*, as foreign-alien and not compatible with the Polish nation. Instead, right-wing MPs in particular favoured certain groups of migrants over others, first and foremost being ‘Polish repatriants’ (who are not really refugees and would not fall under the legal categories within the proposed legislation in this debate, as discussed above) and then ‘Syrian Christians’ (Piotr Polak and Marek Matuszewski 11.06.2015, 94, 226).

The debates on refugees demonstrate a certain degree of mistrust towards other EU member states with regards to their motivations and capabilities: ‘We will have so

⁹² My own stress in the quotations.

many refugees here and Italy, France, and *other rich countries* of the EU will sigh with relief” (Marek Matuszewski 11.06.2015, 94, 226). The most notorious articulation of this position was provided by the opposition leader and the president of the PiS political club, Jarosław Kaczyński (16.09.2015, 100, 13-14). I give his main argument here almost in full due to its controversial nature:

The following question is crucial: (...) does the government, under foreign, outside pressure [*obcy* – alien] and without the *acquiescence of the nation* have the right to take decisions, which with a high degree of probability, will have a negative impact on our lives, on our public space, on our sphere of freedom, (...) on our safety (...) This is about the serious danger of commencing a process (...) that in short looks like this (...) the number of foreigners rapidly grows, then *they* do not abide (and they declare that don’t want to abide) by our law, our customs (...) and then in parallel *they impose* their sensibility and their requirements (...) in a manner that is very aggressive and violent(...) If someone thinks this is not true, let them look around in Europe. Look at Sweden for instance. There are 54 zones where sharia law is enforced and where the state has no control. (...) There are fears of hanging out the Swedish flag at schools, as the custom requires, because there is a cross on the flag. It turns out that Swedish girls, students can hardly wear short dresses, because it is not liked. (...) What is going on in Italy? Churches taken over, used as toilets. What is happening in France? Constant row, implementation of sharia too, patrols that make sure sharia is enforced. The same thing in London, and also the same thing is taking place in the strongest, firmest place – Germany. Do you want this to happen in Poland too? That we are no longer *masters in our own country* [*gospodarz* – master, host, landlord]? Is that what you want? (...) Orban was right here. It is their problem, not ours.⁹³

While at the beginning of the statement it was still not clear who, specifically, Kaczyński was talking about, he quickly moved on from the general to the specific and pinpointed Muslims as unwanted, foreign and alien *others* that are threatening to the Polish national substance, to the very existence and continuity of the Polish nation. Specifically, he hardly used the active voice, making the agents perpetrating the actions obscure – a nebulous and threatening ‘they’. The heavy-handed manipulation of data and the presentation of false information was also part of the contemporary electoral campaign (parliamentary elections were held a month later, in October 2015)

⁹³ The following statement garnered a lot of media attention outside of Poland and provoked an official diplomatic reaction from the Swedish embassy in Warsaw. Polish centrist and liberal media presented it as scandalous, while right-wing commentators viewed them as the unwelcome truth that is silenced by political correctness.

and aimed to stir domestic fears against Muslim *others*.⁹⁴ Rejection of refugees is constructed as *responsibility* for the fate of the Polish nation (Stanisław Wziątek 16.09.2015, 100, 18).

What kinds of subjects and values are constructed?

The citizen-subject and the state

One of the most important discourses used to construct the nation is the one that I delineate as the ‘citizen-subject and the state’. This field emerged first and foremost from the analysis of the debates concerning education (teaching history and Polish in schools). However, it has to be pointed out that the word ‘citizen’ seldom appears in the 170 debates that I examined, except in specific plenary debates about rules for legal citizenship, for passports, and for foreigners. Hence, the following discursive field is a misnomer on purpose. In essence, Polish deputies almost never talk of ‘Polish citizens’ and never address them as such. Instead, words like ‘compatriots’ and ‘members of a nation’ or simply and most frequently ‘Poles’ are used. This is the result of a perceived over-use and thereby discrediting of the word *obywatel* (citizen) by the state socialist authorities prior to 1989. *Obywatel* is not a neutral term, but carries ‘ideological baggage’ and is used only in its most technical and legal understanding, when there is no substitute.

Similarly, the word ‘state’ is often replaced with the word ‘nation’ in Polish. In fact, the latter is far more frequent in all the debates under analysis. This exposes a 19th century vision of the state as the realization of the territorial claims of a certain ethno-national group. This is very clear especially on the right side of the parliament: ‘(...) the state is an emanation of the nation, this is the basis of the philosophy of politics’ (Jan Dziedziczak, 11.01.2012, 5, 44). There is an implicit understanding about the feelings shared within the Polish community. This ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 1983) is held together by feelings of love, pride and memory. ‘May God keep safe all those who feel they are Poles, who cherish [in the archaic and religious form: *miłować*]

⁹⁴ People of migrant origin make up less than 1% of the Polish population (around 0.3%) (GUS 2015).

Poland and each other.’ (Tadeusz Woźniak, 11.01.2012, 5, 51). On the other hand, the biggest threats come from forgetting about the nation’s heroes and the duty owed to them (see the discussion of Polish ‘historical obligations’ within this chapter):

This situation [reducing the number of history classes in school] is dangerous for the Polish state and for our sense of national identity. A young person who does not know their own history is not capable of identifying with their own nation. Sooner or later [that person] will lose perforce their own sense of value. You [the government] want to prepare such a fate to young Poles. Poles have suffered very much over the course of their history and do not deserve such educational experiments (Marzena Wróbel, 28.03.2012, 11...).

Often ‘cosmopolitanism’ is blamed as the villain that endangers the Polish nation. This shows curious interdiscursivity with state socialist rhetoric, in which ‘cosmopolitan’ was used interchangeably with ‘anti-state’ and ‘Jewish’, especially around the time of the 1968 anti-Semitic purges in Poland. Most probably involuntarily, but strikingly so, this rings of 1930s and 1940s anti-Semitism and shares a lot of interdiscursive elements with old xenophobic discourses, which are still recognizable and readable to the consumers of the current discourse:

Stupidity, cosmopolitanism, egoism and the lack of identification with our own nation have cost us too much in the course of our history. It was such sins that brought us to the situation of loss of an independent state and then whole generations of Poles had to fight for this state (Marzena Wróbel, 28.03.2012, 11, 120).

The defining feature of a Pole is his, not her (sic!), heritage, in particular with regard to historic memory: ‘the building of the future has to be based on everything that was magnificent in history, which ennobled us and was the source of pride and respect for the achievements of the *fathers*’⁹⁵ (Jan Ardanowski, 28.03.2012, 11, 123). The Polish state paradoxically has no *mothers*, even though researchers have shown that one of the most defining role models for Polish women has been the trope of *Matka-Polka*⁹⁶ (Janion 1996; Gerber 2011; Hryciuk and Korolczuk 2012; Hryciuk and Korolczuk 2015). By extension, the duties to the state comprise of remembering and commemorating, in order to persevere as the nation. Jan Dziedziczak (11.01.2012, 5,

⁹⁵ Stress is my own in all the translated quotes.

⁹⁶ For a discussion of the *Matka-Polka* trope see chapter 2.

44) sees it along similar lines: ‘it is about showing on the one hand that we are Polish together, and on the other hand the honour of the Polish state.’

Role models: hero, martyr, saint

The individuals commemorated by the *Sejm* in the current parliamentary term shed light on the type of role models that are set for society in terms of work, identity, and worthy ‘Polishness’. The majority of the ‘Polish national pantheon’ were statesmen or politicians and, most importantly, they were all *men* (see Table 6.9). The role models were all masculine and the national identity construct is therefore centred on the masculine ideals and values. According to the dominant narrative, the constructed Polish subjectivity is all-male and all-Polish ethnically, since all of the commemorated people, but one (Vaclav Havel), were Polish. The commemorated artists were honoured for their achievements in ‘spreading Polish culture in Europe’ or lauding the ‘Polish national values’. Most of the writers, musicians and painters were either Romanticist or Positivist, representatives of two cultural and literary periods/trends in Polish history that stressed national identity and ‘Polishness’ above all in their work.

A significant group of commemorated individuals were oppositionists, freedom fighters, and politicians/statesmen that are seen as either victims or heroes of their times. There is a stress on the sacrifices and hardships experienced by them in order to fight for and maintain Poland as a country. They are on the one hand heroes, on the other martyrs for the cause – black and white figures for the most part. Any inconsistencies in their biographies or grey areas in terms of personal choices or particular life events are glossed over and completely silenced. Their main characteristics are bravery and loyalty to Poland. Out of the 39 Polish individuals that were commemorated, not one showed any ambiguity in his/her (in the two female cases) relationship with the particular brand of ‘Polishness’ that is valued (see Figure 6.5). Within this group there are none of those who contested the model of Polish identity based on death and sacrifice, no postmodernists, malcontents, or critics of stereotypical Polish national identity.

Table 6.9 Individuals commemorated by the parliament by occupation and sex (2011-2015).

Female	2
Male	37
Politicians/statesmen/military men	14
Writers/poets	6
Priests/saints	4
Musicians/composers	6
WWII resistance fighters	4
‘Victims of communist regime’/oppositionists	2
Journalists	1
Scientists	1
Businessmen/entrepreneurs	1
Painters	1
Thinkers/philosophers	1
Historians	1
Filmmakers	1

(Source: own compilation).

An important feature of this discursive field is the special significance given to the position of the pope John Paul II in Polish history. ‘For us, Poles, the figure of John Paul II is an exceptional figure’ (Iwona Śledzińska-Katarasińska, 24.04.2014, 66, 159). There is no hint of opposition to this from any side of the *Sejm*:

(...) no one in this room and outside it has any doubts as to the enormous role of John Paul II during his 25-year long pontificate in the process of peaceful transformation, process of democratization and his support for Poland’s actions to accede to the European Union (...) This is beyond dispute (Tadeusz Iwiński, 24.04.2014, 66, 160).

While the quoted left-wing MP (SLD) was trying to argue that the *Sejm* should not commemorate the canonization of the former pope (because state and religion need to be separated), he could not have articulated his request in any other way than in the form of high indebtedness and gratitude towards Wojtyła. In the end, the parliament passed the resolution in honour of this event with less than 30 votes against and called

the former pope: '*Father and Teacher*' (Resolution commemorating the canonization of John Paul II, 24.04.2014, 66, 159).

It seems that current Polish MPs do not venerate other role models than those that have allegedly performed some special acts of sacrifice 'for the country'. Creators, thinkers and people who contributed to material progress and development do not reach the pedestal constructed for the heroes-martyrs-saints. In keeping in line with the necrophile martyrology (cf. Janion 1996) discussed in chapter 2, religion, destruction and death are bases for respect and gratitude much more than development or constructive critique.

The nation vs. Europe

In the discursive constructions of the nation there is significantly less contestation as to the meaning of 'Europe' than in the family and welfare policy area. While in the latter case there are important counter-discourses which painted Europe as the ideal end goal of development and progress, in discourses about the nation, 'Europe' is an unequivocal threat. PO and TR 'modernizing' discourses are hardly articulated. Hence, Polish nationalism defines itself in opposition to Europe – as something separate and often morally better (if not more advanced).⁹⁷ As seen in the debates concerning education in the subjects of history and the Polish language, and especially in those concerning national symbols, the discursive construction of Europe is thoroughly negative. Europe (often used interchangeably with European Union) is seen as a force of globalization and uniformity that aims to obliterate the particular Polish nationality.

So, a false perspective is being created, a false temptation of considering the symbols of Polishness, of the Polish state, symbols expressing patriotism, Polish patriotism, as something outdated. And these symbols are to be replaced with the symbolic of the European Union (Jarosław Zieliński, 21.12.2011, 4, 46).

⁹⁷ Polish nationalism has a long-standing and ugly ethno-nationalist tradition based on chauvinism, racism and xenophobia (going back to the times of the so-called Second Republic, 1918-1939). Its leaders like Roman Dmowski are still commemorated today (cf. Porter *When nationalism began to hate*).

Do you [addressing the ruling parties and the government] want to destroy the knowledge of history of your own nation? Is it about some European political correctness? Is this the preparation to rewriting the history of Europe and of our fatherland anew, according to our current relations with the mighty of the modern world? (Jan Ardanowski, 28.03.2012, 11, 123).

‘Europe’ is often conceptualized as ‘rich countries’ that make demands or want to be comfortable at the expense of Poland. In general, it is suggested that the ruling coalition and the government display a servile attitude towards these destructive forces:

We are dealing with a government, which in order to deserve European praise, will bring about the situation where the Polish youth will not be competitive in the European job market (...) and without a murmur of discontent will perform jobs for little money that rich Europeans do not want to do (Ryszard Terlecki, 28.03.2012, 11, 114).

The solution therefore is to never give in and lose the memory and the national ‘specialness’ of Poland. This was voiced clearly in the previously mentioned controversy about the national football team: ‘(...) we must not surrender to the ubiquitous globalization and to liken ourselves to the given federation [football association]’ (Jan Ziobro, 21.12.2011, 4, 44).

The national others: outsiders and foreigners

The analysis of this discursive field is based on legislative proposals concerning the rules for foreigners to live and work in Poland, legislation on ethnic minorities as well as the issue of how descendants of people who were resettled as a result of the Second World War by Soviet forces could return – ‘repatriate’ to Poland. The legislative projects on national minorities and foreigners were cases of transposition of international obligations (in the form of EU legislation) into Polish law. The law on repatriation was a citizens’ initiative. Importantly, the discursive field about foreigners and local ‘others’ such as minorities is not saturated with xenophobia or chauvinism. There is however clear preference as to what should be rewarded with state care:

This matter [repatriation of Poles living beyond Polish borders] has also a (...) symbolic dimension. It seems to me that this is a certain answer to a civilizational challenge of the 21st century. Namely: whether we should *first help*, bring in to Poland our compatriots from Kazakhstan, who despite persecution maintain their bond with the Polish nation, or should we invest the money the Polish state is putting forward into, for example, people who do not identify with our collective, who come here solely for a better life. I mean some

representatives of ethnic minorities. It appears to me that we should extend a hand to everyone, but as the first steps *we should prefer and help the members of our collective*, just as many other countries in Europe do. Some countries did not do this and now have gigantic social problems due to people, who do not want to assimilate in the new collective. Poles who come from Kazakhstan – and this is proved scientifically – assimilate very quickly. Even if they still have some linguistic problems, they are happy to be in Poland, they consider Poland their fatherland. And this is *a very important signal what we prefer, what is the most important to us* (Jan Dziedziczak, 11.01.2012, 5, 44).

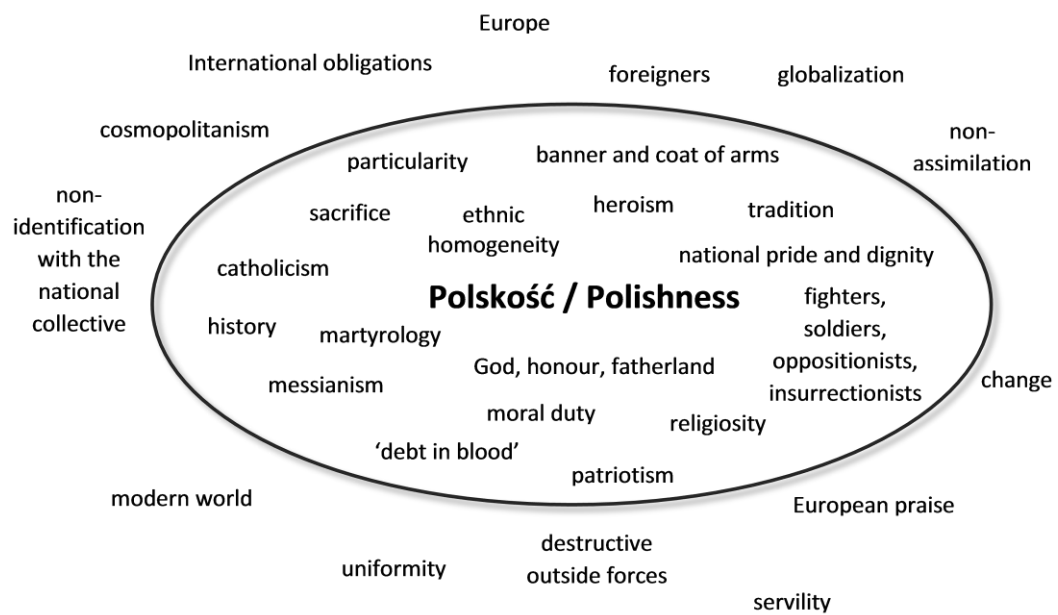
Even though there is no overt racism, there is a clear preference for the ethnically ‘our own’ over the other (preference for ethno-nationalist homogeneity), no matter how that ‘own’ is idealized.⁹⁸

Interestingly, what also comes across in these debates are the economic calculations concerning the ‘others’. These are most clear when it comes to non-Polish outsiders, but can also be seen in the quote on the repatriates as well as in the considerations of the costs and benefits, both material and not, of bringing foreigners to Poland. ‘We need to consider how to treat the repatriation of our compatriots, whether it is a cost or maybe an investment in our society’ (Jakub Płazyński 11.01.2012, 5, 42).

The values and subjects produced by discourses within the theme of national construction show a distinct division between what is ‘ours’ (Polish) and what is ‘foreign’ (outside influence). Figure 6.5 below presents a compilation of the discursive values and subjects as drawn from the parliamentary debates analysed above.

⁹⁸ In practice the people who the MPs are referring to are several thousand in numbers; most do not speak Polish but *tarsanka* (a peculiar mix of Polish, Belorussian, Ukrainian, and Russian) and are descendants of people who were actually resettled from territories which are no longer in Poland today.

Figure 6.5 Components of Polishness.



(Source: own compilation).

*Polak-katolik*⁹⁹

The Polish model of subjectivity that emerges most clearly in the debates on national identity and citizenship, as proscribed by the *Sejm*, is that they are unequivocally male. From the basic linguistic level to the more ideational stage, Polish women do not exist in the parliamentary discourse in this area. MPs never use the feminine grammar gender to denote concepts like ‘compatriots’, ‘Poles’, ‘heroes’, ‘insurgents’, etc. Unlike countries such as Germany, where all proper nouns must be used in both grammatical genders, the Polish ruling elite has not managed to add *rodaczki* (female compatriots), *Polki* (Polish women) or *bohaterki* (female heroes) anywhere. Following the intuitions of Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989), women in the national(ist) discourse rarely play the role of full-fledged and rightful actors of historical events and narratives of the collective.

In a language like Polish, almost every act of speech, every utterance forces the specification of a grammatical gender, meaning the sex of the speaker, the subject of

⁹⁹ ‘Polak-katolik’ – a Pole-Catholic (both nouns in masculine grammatical form, as opposed to the feminine ‘Polka-katoliczka’, which is never mentioned).

the clause, the addressee and/or the object that is being referred to (through pronouns, nouns, grammatical tense forms of verbs, adjectives, even ordinal numbers). For this reason, using consistently feminine forms (when referring to women) is a political statement. The majority of Polish language users however prefers or is just more accustomed to using masculine gender when referring to ‘neutral’ or standard positions/jobs/titles. Hence, almost all speakers use masculine nouns. Only one political group consistently uses both feminine and masculine grammatical genders of nouns (TR). This is often not welcome by right-wing MPs: ‘*Posel* [male MP] Krystyna Pawłowicz. Please do not call me *Posłanka* [female MP]’ (Krystyna Pawłowicz, 24.01.2013, 32, 175). The asymmetrical image of women and men is therefore encoded in the language (the vocabulary, phraseology, and in the syntax and morphology of the language) and produces linguistic sexism or androcentric language (Karwatowska and Szpyra-Kozłowska 2014). Despite having the grammatical option of creating female nouns corresponding to language needs, there is a lexical gap that blocks language users from doing so because of the lower social prestige of female names.

In all the discussed discursive fields and throughout the 170 debates, I did not find one reference to Polish women alongside Polish men. The intellectual ‘default’ member of the Polish nation and citizen is male. In this way, ‘he’ becomes the neutral form and creates an opaqueness in terms of how citizenship is actually gendered. What could this mean for Polish women? It might mean that they stop existing as a group with interests, especially in this area of politics. It also means that they have no other voice than that of a male-national. This is reflected, for instance, in how deputy Marzena Wróbel deploys the male hegemonic identity discourse. There is no plurality in this discourse, not only in terms of the hero-martyr-saint model of masculinity, but also in terms of any other forms of gender identity. Interestingly, some internationally known and widely respected Polish women are absent from Polish national subjectivity symbolics.

Similarly, looking at the people and events that the parliament commemorated in the period 2011-2015, it is clear that the male-neutral model has an effect on what and who is valued in history. Only a single woman was commemorated individually for

her own deeds or accomplishments – Halina Szwarz for the establishment of the University of the Third Age. One more woman was honoured together with her husband (as Second World War resistance members). Furthermore, the only historical event that pertained to women directly was the 2013 commemoration of the 95th anniversary of women’s right to vote. The parliamentary resolution spoke of ‘women receiving’ their voting rights, thereby denying any agency to the late 19th-early 20th century women’s movements that lobbied for women’s voting rights in the newly established independent Republic of Poland in 1918 and 1919.

How is truth created?

The discursive fields constructing the nation use strongly emotive and gendered language and appeal to affect. I show this on the specific example of the uses of the words concerning Poland as homeland.

Fatherland-motherland

In general, in the debates under analysis, Poland is referred to as ‘fatherland’ (*ojczyzna*, often capitalized), which arguably could also be translated as ‘homeland’. The official name of the country is practically always substituted with *ojczyzna*. The word itself is a term that has a certain pathos to it, but is very common and used regularly in the popular register. Conversely, it seems that most MPs have eschewed the older and archaic word *macierz* (motherland).¹⁰⁰ It does pop up in especially emotional addresses, particularly by right wing MPs, like that of PiS’ Marek Polak (11.01.2012, 5, 52) in the debate on the ‘repatriation’ of Poles from abroad.¹⁰¹ *Macierz* also features in the debate surrounding the *Sejm* resolution on the ‘90th Anniversary of the return of part of Upper Silesia to the Polish State being reborn’ (13.07.2012, 18, 188). Deputy Maciej Łopiński, a PiS deputy (13.07.2012, 18, 188), speaks about ‘reuniting Upper Silesia with the motherland’.

¹⁰⁰ In fact, *macierz* is the archaic word for ‘mother’, but does not function linguistically as such anymore.

¹⁰¹ Repatriation refers to the ancestors of those who were resettled by Soviet authorities as a result of the frontline and then border changes of the Second World War (for the most part the originally resettled people have already passed away).

Judging from these contexts, ‘motherland’ carries a more emotional and sentimental baggage than ‘fatherland’. It goes back to Medieval and especially later Romanticist notions of *Polonia*, the anthropomorphic Poland-as-a-woman image of the country. *Polonia* has some similarity to the French *Marianne*, but more to the Russian *Rossiia-Matushka*. The difference is in the suffering and destitution of *Polonia*, which does not stand for victory or call to arms. Arguably, identifying the phantasm¹⁰² body of the national collective with a female figure (a female body) results in the uplifting (putting on a pedestal) of the imagined woman, on the one hand, and the instrumentalization and marginalization of the real woman and her body, on the other (cf. Janion 1996; Graff 2013). Hence, real women are seen as important for the nation in terms of reproduction and sexuality, as I observed in the family and welfare debates in the previous chapter. In this discourse, while the figure of the mother is more emotional, the ‘father’ is definitely more important. As I have shown in the sections above, what matters is what fathers have left as heritage for Poland, as well as what fathers have taught the nation.

Another curious name for Poland that is derived from history, and used in parliamentary debates, is the ‘Most Serene Republic’ (*Najjaśniejsza Rzeczpospolita*).¹⁰³ Here, the title is a reference to the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Najjaśniejsza Rzeczpospolita Polska*), an elective monarchy in Eastern Europe that lasted from 1569 (Union of Lublin) until 1795 (Third Partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) and encompassed some of the territories of today’s Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, parts of Russia, and Ukraine. Unexpectedly, it is not used by right-wing MPs, but by a centre-right ruling party MP and a liberal opposition member (Marek Rząsa, 21.12.2011, 4, 46 and Piotr Paweł Bauć, 21.12.2011, 4, 47). As a cultural note, it refers to the time of the so-called First Polish Republic, which was in fact an oligarchic and feudal state run by the nobility, catholic church hierarchs, and aristocracy. However, within the Polish memory and

¹⁰² A term coming from elaborations of psychoanalysis that is often used by Polish cultural theorists to signify the realm of imagined people, objects, and realities.

¹⁰³ ‘Most Serene Republic’ (*Serenissima Respublica* in Latin) was a title of several of European states throughout history (most of them in modern day Italy).

cultural politics, it is called the 'Republic of Two Nations' (Poland and Lithuania) and is presented as the golden age of tolerance, multiculturalism, and grandeur (in terms of territorial expanse especially). Despite there being no direct historical or even cultural links between the current 'Third Republic' and the 'First Republic',¹⁰⁴ Polish politicians are keen to use the reference to signal imagined continuity and inheritance, but also perceived legitimacy.

What can and cannot be said?

Overall, there is significantly less discursive contestation and opposition in this area of politics than in the one of family and welfare politics. In practice, all sides of the parliament use the hegemonic discourse of nationalism (or patriotism, as they call it). Possibly, there is a case of self-silencing on the part of deputies who do not share this perspective. There is a strong representation of right-wing voices in this area, but not only; if the voice comes from the 'left' or centre, it uses the same discourse. Either this is a case of unspoken and uncontested institutional rules, or the ideological hegemony in terms of subjectivity, memory, and national identity is so prevalent that there are no competing discursive frames which can be used and allow for the maintenance of respect and prestige. There is a certain 'banality' in the genderedness of this patriarchal nationalism. However, it is significant that the related discourse is widely accepted and never questioned. It means that no political force calls into question the dominant, masculinist constructions of national subjectivity and commemoration. The impression is conveyed that women have little or no place in Polish subjectivity and historical celebrations.

The dominant narrative on national identity shows interdiscursivity with Polish catholic church narratives, which historically have been used as vessels for preserving national identity. Deputies consider catholic prayer as a potential determinant for Polish citizenship for the repatriants (11.01.2012, 5, 41-60). The parliamentary commemorative celebrations also include priests, saints, and Christianising missions.

¹⁰⁴ See discussion in chapter 1.

Conclusions

The opening quote suggested expectations of ‘Polishness’ based on the belonging to the national collective. The analysis of the parliamentary debates has shown very specific constructions of subjectivity and values that compromise Polishness. Therefore, there are several components that glue the Polish nation together: founding myths and mythologized history, the particular vision of a collective, the common ‘national character’, and threats to the nation (outside and inside) (cf. Graff 2013). Based on the parliamentary debates under analysis, these components include the history of suffering and sacrifice in the Second World War and under ‘communist totalitarian dictatorship’. Poles are self-sacrificing, honourable, brave, proud, and special. The threats to the constructed Polishness come both from inside the country (from those who do not want to assimilate or those who do not accept the Polish values) and from outside (in the form of foreigners, international imposed obligations, but also importantly from ethnic diversity).

As I discussed in chapter 2, gender is one of the most important components that naturalizes the idea of the nation. The nation is constructed through masculine, catholic, and nationalist subjects. Significantly, the stress on war and military endeavour as that, which is considered worthy of commemoration and celebration, points to the militarization of Polish nationhood. This emerges from debates on the key historical figures to which the Polish nation is allegedly indebted. They are almost exclusively male, fighters, religious figures, and conservative statesmen from the time of the Second Republic. Therefore, Polish citizens are seen as national(ist) subjects who must humbly commemorate the masculine nation and its male conservative and religious symbolic figures. Even the language practice is androcentric, which strengthens hegemonic masculine hierarchies. The nation is usually referred to as ‘fatherland’, whereas the term ‘motherland’ is only used in more emotive (and thus less masculine, more feminized, from the perspective of the speaker) contexts.

Strongly masculine and militarized overtones are also present in debates on national symbols in sport, which can be juxtaposed to war, and this essentialized as another masculine national enterprise. The catholicism of Polishness comes clearly across in

the debates in immigration and refugees, who were constructed as a threat to the national collective and its values for their difference religious faith. In the nationalist discourses, Europe and non-ethnic Polish citizens and foreigners are *othered* and portrayed as alien to the values of Polishness. While as the opening song suggests, art and culture allow for open contestation and a ‘struggle with Polishness, the hegemonic parliamentary discourses on the nation do not permit discursive dissidence or subversion. ‘Patriotism’ and catholicism are treated as given constituent components of the construction of Polish subjectivity. Thus, the last empirical chapter of the dissertation discusses the Polish nexus of politics and religion in more detail on the example of the ‘war on gender’ campaign.

Chapter 7: The ‘war on gender’ in Poland

*‘Equality of opportunity – yes, but gender equality is a heresy.
There is no gender equality.
(...) Biology says ‘no’, nature says ‘no’, God’s law says ‘no’ (...)
You can be outraged with (...) the Lord.’
Beata Kempa¹⁰⁵*

Since mid-2012 Poland witnessed a heated debate over so-called ‘gender ideology’. The discussion has taken the form of attacks and virulent critiques disseminated by high-level politicians, catholic establishment and neoconservative media throughout the local and national levels of administration and government. The term *gender* (used in English) was even chosen as the word of the year 2013 in Poland.¹⁰⁶ Why was an obscure academic concept and foreign word the most-discussed topic in Poland? The Polish language has not got two words for ‘sex’ and ‘gender’. What is more, there is no direct or linguistically convenient translation for the word ‘gender’, as it is used by social sciences (in Anglophone countries especially). The Polish equivalent of ‘gender’ stemming from the field of linguistics (*rodzaj*), which exists in Polish, has never stuck in social sciences. For this reason, most scholars use the English term (keeping its original spelling). A minority have resorted to using the awkward wording construction: ‘social and cultural sex’.¹⁰⁷

The political and discursive context in which ‘gender’ emerged as a hot topic was crucial. This chapter shows that Poland saw the waging of a peculiar ‘war on gender’ in political debates that originated in the catholic church and faith-based organizations and spilled over into mainstream politics. It also analyses a central puzzle, which exists in the discursive construction of gender as an archenemy and threat in Polish political debates of 2012-2014. Given that feminism as a movement and a way of thinking was discredited already in the early transformation years, the question is: what was the

¹⁰⁵ The SP (Solidarity of Poland) deputy, Beata Kempa, during the parliamentary debate on the Istanbul Convention (24.09.2014, 75, 111).

¹⁰⁶ The selection was done by the academics from the University of Warsaw and the Polish Language Foundation. ‘Gender’ won ahead of words like ‘wiretapping’ and ‘Euromaidan’.

¹⁰⁷ Paradoxically, the lack of linguistic differentiation between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ in Polish can be arguably in line with the developments in gender studies, according to which scholars no longer make stringent exclusive divisions between the two concepts, no longer seeing a case of ‘either-or’.

significance of the anti-gender discourse now? In whose interest did this happen and what work was done by the deployment of this discourse today? The main issue is to investigate how much the discourse in politics was a reaction and how much it was an active and purposive policy by political parties. As the opening quote suggests, there is a connection between opposition to gender equality in the discourse of ‘war on gender’ and the role of constructions of natural law and religion in politics. I argue the anti-gender mobilization emerged as a response of party politics to catholic church needs; this happened in parallel with a political mobilization against the burdensome post-transformation inequalities that produced many political ‘losers’ disenchanted with the mainstream political arena. Specifically, I explore how right-wing politicians followed what the church provided them with in this discourse. The church conveniently pushed a scapegoat onto the scene, which the politicians took on willingly.

The chapter starts with a brief discussion of the broader transnational debates about the backlash against feminism and regional anti-gender trends in recent years. The subsequent analysis is divided according to the questions outlined in chapter 3: Who is speaking? What/who is being talked about? What subjects and values are produced? How is truth created? What can and cannot be said? Next, I unpack the content of the anti-feminist and anti-gender discourses in Polish politics using the example of the ongoing problems with the Polish signing and ratification of the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. I also trace the evolution of specific formal political institutions that take on gender as one of their main topics: the new parliamentary group ‘Stop Gender Ideology!’, the parliamentary group ‘Counteracting the Atheization of Poland’, and the office of the Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment in the Polish government. Specifically, I look at the parliamentary debates in which such discursive framing was used in the discussion of parliamentary bills, policies, and specific legislation dealing with women’s or sexual minority issues in Poland. The chapter concludes with the possible interpretations of the reasons to deploy this discourse and points to the possible answers.

International context, change and continuity

This chapter aims to shed light on the ways the debate on ‘gender ideology’ is interconnected with earlier anti-feminist discourses and practices from the post-transformation context of Poland, as well as the Eastern European region more broadly. This is of particular significance because post-transformation Eastern Europe has been arguably the locus of the rise of religion in the form of ‘revenge of God’ (Kepel 1993) and nationalism. Both have been threatening to equality and diversity and have rolled back the achievements of feminist and LGBTQ+ movements. The French political scientist Gilles Kepel (1993) sees the ‘revenge of God’ in political use of religious *ressentiment* (he avoids the term ‘fundamentalism’ itself because he claims its protestant origins are inadequate to understand revivalist movements throughout the world) ranging from America to Europe and the Middle East. He traces it in protestantism, judaism, and islam. Kepel argues that these revivalist and often revanchist movements resist the spirit of modernity and secularism. They seek to recreate society according to a set of symbols and values in accordance with their holy scriptures (Kepel 1993). They pursue both a strategy from above, attempting to seize state power and using domestic legislation to promote their ends; and a strategy from below, ‘evangelizing’ the masses and seeking to take control of their daily lives through mobilized focused protests, for instance. The same phenomena can be traced in Eastern Europe with the resurgence of *ressentiment* in catholic and Eastern orthodox religions especially, but also in other faiths.

The recent ultraconservative anti-gender mobilization is not unique to Poland, where progress in the field of gender equality has not only been rather stagnant and uneven, but also much shakier and easier to reverse than activists and academics had imagined (Grzebalska 2016). Also in countries such as Croatia, Germany, Italy, France, Lithuania, Latvia, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia, the post-war consensus on human rights seems to be threatened as issues such as gender mainstreaming, sexual education, LGBTQ+ rights and reproductive rights have come under coordinated attacks by the church, religious and lay conservative NGOs, right-wing politicians, and even grassroots mobilizations (Kovats and Põim 2015). Since the transnational anti-gender campaign began unfolding around the period of 2012-2014, these actors have

arguably achieved a lot in material terms: they managed to mobilize hundreds of thousands of people for demonstrations and civil initiatives across Europe, hindered the passing of progressive laws or the ratification of international treaties advancing human rights, cut state funds for gender quality programs and, in countries like Hungary, even had input in the change of the constitution (Kovats and Põim 2015).

Hence, the period around the years 2012-2013 marks a critical juncture for the previously relatively well-established human rights consensus in Europe. In several countries, gender equality, sexual education, and LGBTQ+ rights became the target of interrelated attacks and have been brought to unprecedented public attention lumped together under the term ‘gender ideology’ (Kovats and Põim 2015). As researchers from France, Germany, Poland, and Slovakia have pointed out, the term ‘gender ideology’ had sporadically appeared before, but it became influential in European public discourse only recently (Kovats and Põim 2015).

The anti-gender mobilizations show significant intertextuality and interdiscursivity across European countries. For instance, in 2008, the German ‘marches for life’ or so-called ‘thousand crosses-marches’ roused public attention to a renewed fight against abortion and in favour of the protection of ‘unborn life’ (using the same concept as in Poland). Similarly, in Hungary in 2012, the new constitution has laid down the law protecting ‘the fundamental human right to life from the moment of conception’ and declared that marriage should only be between a man and a woman. The following year, in France, over one million people demonstrated against ‘gay marriage’ (muslims and christians together, showing ecumenical cooperation). As in Poland, the term ‘gender’ only reached the French public attention around 2013 (Brustier 2015). In Slovakia (as in Poland), the main trigger of the debate on ‘gender ideology’ and a focus point for the anti-gender discourse was arguably the Pastoral letter addressed to catholics by the Slovak Bishop Conference in December 2013 (Ďurinová 2015). In Italy, the so-called Standing Sentinels (*Sentinelle in Piedi*) have launched silent public

protests to protect the ‘traditional family model’ in response to a legislative proposal that outlawed homophobia and LGBT+ discrimination in 2013.¹⁰⁸

Thus, common focal points or triggers of the anti-gender campaigns all over Europe involve existing legislative proposals in the field of women’s and sexual minority rights, as well as the perceived gains by the LGBTQ+ community or by feminists. Specifically, these include civil partnerships or same-sex marriages, sexual education for children, anti-discrimination laws that criminalize homophobia, gender equality policies (and gender mainstreaming), and reproductive and sexual health rights. The catholic church especially, but also the Eastern orthodox church, provide narratives that catalyse the ‘war on gender’. Arguably, the organized religions have managed to channel different types of societal discontent with globalization and produce an alternative ‘anti-globalist’ account related to the economic crisis responses; one in which ‘gender’ plays the role of the personified imposition of alien and oppressive values. For historic reasons, this kind of rhetoric has very strong resonance in the postcolonial and (semi)peripheral area of Eastern Europe. Therefore, the ‘war on gender’ can be seen as an instance of hijacking of post-colonialism that I discussed in chapters 2 and 4.

In Eastern Europe, the rise of religious *ressentiment* and nationalism are interwoven and mutually constitutive (cf. Kepel 1993). As I discussed in more detail in chapter 4, religion is often the dominant component of the revived and mythologized national identities. Using the rhetoric of ‘return to tradition’ (Funk 1993; Grabowska 2012; Magyan-Vincze 2006), it gives religious practices a more unchangeable and permanent image. In the light of economic crises, Eastern European states have readily supported and often used narratives of religion and nationalism in order to divert people’s attention through hate campaigns of moral panic and by offering a scapegoat. Hence, the newly coined terms ‘gender ideology’ or ‘genderism’ enforce (reinforce) and entrench specific ultraconservative religious interests in politics. Considering that there are few parliamentarians promoting women’s and sexual minority issues and that

¹⁰⁸ For a description of the activities, motivations, and methods, see the *Sentinelle* website: <http://sentinelleinpiedi.it/chi-siamo/> (accessed November 2016).

‘politics is a man’s world’ in Eastern Europe, the question is how the anti-gender discourse has been impacting the institutional and discursive context of the Polish parliament (Pabijanek 2013).

As I discussed in the previous chapters of this dissertation, Polish post-transformation politics rejected feminism and lauded the protection of ‘our’ (=Polish traditional) values. Thus, anti-feminist discourses are not new and neither are they specific or endemic to this particular region only (as can be seen in the examples above). Therefore, it is all the more important to question the extent to which and how the anti-gender discourse ties into more global discourses that castigate feminism and gender studies. Already in 1991, Susan Faludi showed the workings of an anti-feminist backlash in the United States, following what was seen as the ‘women’s decade’ involving significant feminist advances of the 1970s. Faludi (1991) argued that the anti-feminist backlash then took the form of media claims that feminism created problems such as (one of the favourite myths) the ‘epidemic of infertility’ and the ‘men shortage’. These were illusory and constructed without any reliable evidence. According to Faludi (1991), the backlash was also a historical trend, generally recurring when ultraconservatives perceived that women have made substantial gains in their efforts to obtain equal rights.

In her article *Lost between the Waves? The Paradoxes of Feminist Chronology and Activism in Contemporary Poland*, Agnieszka Graff (2003) offered one of the first interpretations of the Polish backlash against women’s and sexual rights in Poland. Talking about the pre-accession period in Poland, she argued that ‘if we were to apply American chronology to this particular moment, we would probably have to call it a third wave form with a second wave content in a backlash context’ (Graff 2003: 102). She was referring to the strongly misogynist and mythicized anti-feminism of the 1980s in the West, combined with modern social media articulations and popular culture references to third wave feminism.

However, Graff also observed that such a paradoxical moment for Polish feminism is ‘precisely what calls for a new analytical framework, one tuned into local specificity and political context, as well as the dynamics of cultural borrowing’ (Graff 2003: 103).

As I have shown in chapter 2, it has been a longstanding tradition to assess the social processes that take place in Eastern Europe and post-state socialist states from the perspective of Western historical narratives. Arguably, the account suggested by Graff can be seen as an example of this. Social transformations and the development of civic movements in the region were often seen as reflections of global and transnational processes and trends. However, what was often missing or understated in such assessments was the local context, one that shapes the modes and the intensity of both conservative and feminist rhetoric and practices (Grabowska 2014). Therefore, the anti-gender processes certainly have to be considered as a part of the transnational process of backlash against women and sexual minority rights, but they also need to be traced back to the historical moments that secured the unique position of the catholic church in Poland – one that allowed the representatives of this institution to express their opinions and views from a position of power and to claim their indispensability to Polish culture, society, and politics (see chapter 4).

The recent anti-gender campaign and the solidified role of the catholic church in the public sphere are certainly not the first signs of a backlash against women's and sexual rights in Poland. These processes are not particular to the Polish political scene either, as we have seen so far. Elżbieta Korolczuk (2014) proposes to see the recent 'war on gender' as a transnational rather than local phenomenon. Authors like Louise Chappell (2006: 491) have shown that during the 1990s, at the international level, an 'unholy alliance' of the Vatican, Muslim fundamentalists, the US right-wing, and occasionally other states have united to fight against women's reproductive and sexual rights at the United Nations and in other international organizations.

This was done mainly around and in response to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace (shortly known as the Beijing Conference). The Beijing Conference resulted in a Platform for Action that is considered by many activists and researchers as a cornerstone in terms of progress on women's rights globally. The heated discussion on how to define the term 'gender' dominated the negotiations and extended later into the debates establishing the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The 'unholy alliances' apparently '[could not] accept ambiguous terminology concerning unqualified control over sexuality and

fertility, particularly as it could be interpreted as a societal endorsement of (...) homosexuality' (UN Document No. A/CONF.177/20).¹⁰⁹ During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Russia, and other Eastern European countries have joined the bandwagon of the 'unholy alliance'.

As outlined in chapter 4, when several Eastern European countries aspired to join the EU, they subscribed to the gender equality and gender mainstreaming policies of the EU. At that time, there was no open rejection of the principles of gender equality in the countries that a decade later experienced the 'war on gender' in the region. As David Paternotte observed (2014), these recent mobilizations and anti-gender campaigns in Europe display partly new discourses and forms of organization, attempts by established conservative actors to reach beyond their traditional circles and connect with a wider audience. Hence, while such discourses are not entirely new, there is something particularly strong about them currently in Europe. There are intertwining global and domestic features.

Leading up to the 'war on gender' in Poland

While not permeating into the greater public (not until the late 2000s at least), feminist, gender and queer studies modestly, but progressively established themselves as academic disciplines in most Polish universities, academic centres and think tanks throughout the late 1990s and 2000s. What is more, as I showed before, there were little qualms about accepting the EU *acquis communautaire* concerning equality and gender mainstreaming in the accession process before 2004 (albeit scholars have argued most of this legislation was transposed in Eastern Europe without even the basic understanding of what it meant in practice). Hence, gender as an analytical and academic concept has been present in Polish (academic and feminist) debates in the last two decades. Therefore, it is all the more important to ask why there was such a public onslaught on a widely unknown scholarly concept.

¹⁰⁹ In fact, the term 'gender ideology' itself was coined by the catholic church in relation to the United Nations conferences in Cairo and Beijing. For a discussion see: D.E. Buss (1998), Relics and Rights: the Vatican and the Beijing Conference on Women, *Social & Legal Studies* 7(3), 339-363.

As I discussed in chapter 4, the starting point to understand this is the powerful role of the catholic church in Polish politics. Coming out of the state socialist years, the church had accumulated an unparalleled social capital, being the focus place of democratic opposition and the protector of the true ('anti-communist') national identity. As argued earlier, in chapters 4 and 5, the social legislation implemented in Poland since 1989 has followed the catholic church recommendations (Chelstowska et al. 2013). Poland has a restrictive abortion law and there are controversies about the interpretation of the definition of marriage within the Polish constitution; there are no civil partnerships within Polish law.

All these legal provisions have been presented to the Polish public either as a compromise or as the 'will of the conservative majority'.¹¹⁰ In practice, they were a direct result of lobbying by the Polish catholic church in politics (Środa 2009; Chelstowska et al. 2013). The 'compromise' was presented as common sense of the public, specifying that this was the 'religious' or 'conservative' majority. Because politicians in Poland accommodate the church, provisions with regards to 'worldview matters' (*kwestie światopogladowe*), as all questions regarding sexuality and relationships are commonly called in Poland, are either banned, heavily restricted by law (for instance, abortion), or ignored by the authorities (as in the case of sexual education). Nonetheless, as I showed in chapter 5, all these practices exist and are not rare. As one political commentator has pointed out, in this way 'freedom has been privatized in Poland and access to it depends on social class, and therefore on the contents of one's wallet, level of education and place of residence' (Sierakowski 2014). Sierakowski (2014) rightly pinpointed the socio-economical conditionings that determine whether someone in Poland can enjoy liberal rights and freedoms, or even access to health care and institutionalized care.

As I discussed in more detail in chapter 4, Polish feminist activists and scholars stated that women's reproductive rights (e.g. the liberalization of the abortion law) and a freeze on civil partnerships legislation were 'sold off' by the SLD government in 2001-

¹¹⁰ The 1993 anti-abortion law in Poland is almost unanimously referred to as a 'historic compromise'. For a discussion of the law and its background, see chapter 5.

2005 in exchange for the support of the church in the EU accession referendum (held in June 2003) (Graff 2008a; Środa 2009). Polish feminist activists protested these developments in a letter to the EU Commission in 2003 (List Kobiet 2003). However, the SLD government considered church support for EU integration as vital for the referendum. For that reason, despite having a parliamentary majority and against their electoral promises, the SLD government never again broached the question of liberalizing abortion in parliament. Thus, as can be seen from the discussion in chapter 4, pre-2004 politics set the stage for the full-fledged conservative backlash that began once the transformation and accession periods was considered as completed.

The anti-equality backlash arguably began with the debate on the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). Poland has been debating the signing and the ratification of the treaty since the spring of 2012. As I have briefly discussed in chapter 1, the Minister of Justice, Jarosław Gowin, refused to sign the document because, in his view, it went 'against the family values of most Poles'. After Gowin's dismissal from the PO-PSL government and strong lobbying by women's rights organizations, the new Minister of Justice signed the Istanbul Convention in December 2012. Following that the document was stalled in 'inter- and intra-ministerial consultations' and, later, in parliamentary committee proceedings.

Finally, the issue of ratification was set to be discussed in the first plenary session of September 2014, but was postponed to the next session due to the government change.¹¹¹ At that parliamentary session (24-26 September 2014), the proposal to ratify the convention was rejected and sent back to the legislative committees for more work. In the end, under the pressure of the new Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz, the parliament ratified the Istanbul Convention in February 2015 (Kopacz apparently controlled the dissenting PO MPs), and in April of that year President Komorowski signed it (arguably as part of the electoral campaign prior to the October 2015 elections).

¹¹¹ PM Donald Tusk became the President of European Council and the government was reshuffled, with the speaker of the Sejm, Ewa Kopacz, becoming the PM in September 2014.

Who is speaking?

The church authorities and catholic hierarchs

While most political and media observers pinpointed the origins of the discursive war on gender to the summer of 2013 (when Polish bishops first spoke vocally against ‘gender’ in public), some scholars have traced the ‘gender ideology’ discourse to specialist and obscure catholic church publications of 2010 (Duda 2016). As argued, the political beginnings of the ‘war on gender’ lie in the refusal to sign the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in the spring of 2012 by the Minister of Justice. The following months saw a virtual avalanche of anti-feminist and anti-gender rhetoric.

The intensified church assault began with bishop Tadeusz Pieronek (initially considered part of the liberal wing of the church) adding a side comment at a conference: ‘I would like to add that the ideology of gender presents a threat worse than Nazism and Communism combined’ (Sierakowski 2014). This meant that the construct of ‘gender ideology’ was worse than the two main historical enemies against which post-1989 Polish national subjectivity was built. At that stage, Pieronek did not have more to say about his statement, nor could he name any victims or give the number of people killed or affected by the threat of gender (Sierakowski 2014). He did, however, repeat his statement, while adding that ‘gender ideology’ is at odds with nature and natural law.

Bishop Pieronek’s statement sparked a series of ever more controversial actions by the church hierarchy. Posters appeared in schools and in regional parliament sessions calling to ‘Protect Your Child Against Gender’. Towards the end of 2013, the major Polish daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* reported that young children had begun asking their parents how they can be vaccinated against gender.¹¹² Since the summer of 2013, almost every day has seen new pronouncements warning against gender

¹¹² The full article is available at: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,15112785,Mamo_czy_jestem_zaszczepiona_na_gender.html (accessed November 2016).

ideology. For example, in a public talk in Poznań, a priest said that ‘gender leads to the devastation of families’ and ‘is associated with radical feminism, which advocates abortion, the employment of women and the detention of children in preschools’.¹¹³

Polish feminist scholars, such as Agnieszka Graff (2014) and Weronika Grzebalska (2015), have pointed out that the apogee of ‘anti-genderism’ coincided with the outbreak of a paedophilia scandal in the Polish catholic church. Unsurprisingly then, the main agents of the anti-gender discourse were high officials of the Polish conference of bishops. For instance, archbishop Józef Michalik claimed that ‘gender ideology’ was one of the causes (along with pornography and divorce) that lead to child sexual abuse. He infamously blamed children from broken homes or patchwork families for causing paedophilia in the catholic church, by claiming that such children ‘cling to priests’ because they supposedly lack love.¹¹⁴ To turn away attention from the paedophilia scandals among catholic church authorities, the bishops constructed a worse evil and true enemy: ‘genderism is an anthropological heresy, it is beyond salvation’.¹¹⁵

The catholic clergy played on racist and chauvinist fears and presented them during church meetings and sermons:

[G]ender ideology is aimed against me and my identity, which originates in who I am as a human being, is determined by my biology, that is the genetic code (...) Gender ideology leads to the death of a given civilization (...) I can even easily imagine how in some time (I hope I shall not live to see this myself) in the year 2050, the several white people left will be shown to other human races here in Europe, just like Indians were shown in the United States in reservations. There were once these people who lived here, but they stopped existing at their own behest, because they could not accept who they were biologically’ (Archbishop Jędraszewski, Meeting with the youth, Pabianice 17.11.2013).¹¹⁶

¹¹³ For a full description of the event, see:

http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,15095636,Ks_prof_Bortkiewicz_o_przerwanym_wykladzie_w_Poznaniu_.html (accessed November 2016).

¹¹⁴ For more details on the story, see: <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/abp-michalik-o-pedofilii-dziecko-ignie-drugiego-czlowieka-wciaga,361169.html> (accessed November 2016).

¹¹⁵ For more see: <http://natemat.pl/84629,arcybiskup-hoser-gender-jest-herezja-neguje-plan-bozy-w-stosunku-do-czlowieka> (accessed November 2016).

¹¹⁶ The full story is available at: <http://www.dzienniklodzki.pl/artykul/1044485,abp-jedraszewski-bialych-beda-pokazywac-jak-indian-w-rezerwatach,id,t.html> (accessed November 2016).

The quote is characterized by using and conflating medical-scientific, rationalizing, and faith-based stylistics. This does not mean that the logic of argumentation is medical, logical, or religious. It just uses rhetoric techniques based in those traditions – the references are at style level, not at the level of sense and facts. According to this line of thinking, individual DNA coding seems to fulfil the function that was until now performed (according to religious argumentation) by the individual and unique human soul. What is more, according to the bishops, the dangers of gender ideology came not only from the rejection of the godly ‘natural’ gender role order, but also from its potential consequences in the form of annihilation of the white race.

The bishops voiced their official opinion in a pastoral letter entitled *Threats to the Family Stemming from the Ideology of Gender*. The letter was read in most Polish churches instead of sermon on Christmas Day 2013, when even the usual church non-goers traditionally attend mass as part of a wider cultural habit. The letter proclaimed that the ‘sexualization’ of children and youth was the main goal of gender equality education (in pre-schools and schools). The word ‘sexualization’ is a neologism in Polish, which initially gained prominence in the context of the this discourse. Similarly to Minister Gowin’s original claim (see chapter 1), the church saw the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence as promoting ‘non-stereotypical sexual roles’ and causing the breakdown of the educational system by requiring education on homosexuality and transsexuality (List Pasterski 2013).¹¹⁷

In the pastoral letter, the bishops also attacked the World Health Organization by claiming that it ‘promotes, among other things, masturbation by preschool-aged children, encouraging them to seek joy and pleasure in touching their own bodies and those of their peers’ (List Pasterski 2013). The bishops warned that ‘as a consequence of the education implemented by youth sexual educators, young people become regular customers of pharmaceutical, erotic, pornographic, paedophile and abortion

¹¹⁷ The full text of the letter is available at: http://www.polskokatolicki.pl/RODZINA/2013_12/List_Pasterski_AD2013.htm (accessed November 2016).

enterprises' (List Pasterski 2013). Eventually the original text of the letter was replaced with a toned-down version less than two hours after it was published.¹¹⁸ Even so, the bishops announced that both versions were legitimate, but that the original was for pastoral use and the second version for the laity.

'Gender' or 'genderism' has been demonised as a wicked and well-prepared plan to destroy the innocence of Polish children. Following this logic, children would be confused about gender roles at an early age, only to become later the slaves of the homo /feminist /anti-church lobby. As one journalist put it in the Catholic journal *Niedziela*, 'gender ideology' has disastrous consequences for:

Polish families, the church and eventually the Polish nation, through the propagation of a new type of person who is endowed with the freedom to choose his /her sexual identity, regardless of biological sex. Since such freedom is against 'natural law' and God's will, this trend will inevitably result in emotional and moral confusion, eventually destroying the very foundations of our civilization.¹¹⁹

Thus, 'gender ideology' was essentialized as supreme ontological evil, threatening the very existence of Polish catholicism and the continuity of the Polish nation, since the two are inextricably linked within ultraconservative discourses, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter.

Anti-gender mobilization in Polish politics

Echoing the campaign driven by the catholic church, right-wing and ultraconservative politicians (mainly from the opposition parties, such as PiS and SP, but not only) pointed to the concept of 'gender ideology' as the new threat to traditional family values in the country. Lining up behind the catholic church, conservative politicians convened a new parliamentary group and called it 'Stop Gender Ideology!', consisting of one woman and fifteen men in January 2014 (within a couple of weeks after the pastoral letter). Members of regional parliaments (for instance in Lublin and Szczecin)

¹¹⁸ Such information came from *Gazeta Wyborcza*, see: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,15198710,Gender_na_niedziele_Jak_sie_zmienial_list_Episkopatu_.html (accessed November 2016).

¹¹⁹ Full article available at: http://sunday.niedziela.pl/artykul.php?dz=spoleczenstwo&id_art=00969 (accessed April 2016).

held sessions to monitor the use of funds on school and pre-school curricula that implemented gender equality norms.¹²⁰

The role of regional self-governments in this context is important because, despite being centralized, education in Poland falls under the funding and monitoring competencies of regional parliaments and governments. Significantly, in March 2014, the Wołomin county (outside of Warsaw) launched the program ‘Family-Friendly School’ and started granting certificates to schools that do not teach gender equality or sexual education, under the guise of ‘protecting children from harmful information, sexual initiation, and the questioning of biological and cultural stability of sexual roles’.¹²¹ By mid-2016, around 700 educational institutions from all over Poland (public and private, from pre-schools to high schools and professional schools) have applied and received the certificate.¹²²

While the then Prime Minister Donald Tusk remained silent on the topic, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, had to defend teachers who implemented gender equality programs, as well as the spending on gender mainstreaming. She also issued official statements explaining what the concept of gender meant. She wrote a detailed letter to the Polish anti-genderists and the catholic church aiming to explain the term ‘gender’ and ‘gender studies’ (Kozłowska-Rajewicz 2014). She received answers from bishops that were marked by polemical arrogance; for instance, archbishop Jędraszewski responded by saying that: ‘it’s “the old thing” again. From outside the wise tell us what the church should teach. This is really chastising a student and telling us we do not know what we are talking about’.¹²³

¹²⁰ For the full story view *Kurier Lubelski* at: http://wyborcza.pl/1,91446,15286657,Lublin_Dyskusja_w_radzie_miasta_o_gender_PiS_wycofalo.html (accessed November 2014).

¹²¹ <http://szkola-przyjaznarnodzinie.pl/strona-glowna/certyfikat/> (accessed April 2016)

¹²² The list of the institutions that have received the certificate is available at: <http://szkola-przyjaznarnodzinie.pl/lista-placowek/> (accessed April 2016)

¹²³ Information about the bishops’ answers can be found on the catholic news portal: <http://www.pch24.pl/biskupi-odpowiadaja-kozłowskiej-rajewicz-,20501,i.html> (accessed April 2016).

All other institutional and administrative reactions by the government side were ambiguous. They allowed the anti-gender campaigners to gain discursive ground and achieve prominence in the mainstream. While the Istanbul Convention got signed, its ratification was stalled in 'inter-ministerial negotiations' until early 2015. Finally, the parliament ratified it in February 2015 and President Komorowski signed in April, just before the May presidential elections. The creation of anti-gender parliamentary groups had explicitly normalized the 'war on gender' in politics. While the 'Stop Gender Ideology!' group had no direct bearing on legislation (it is not a parliamentary legislative committee), the mass public saw no difference in terms of the details of the legislative process: 'war on gender' entered parliament officially. This gave it status and importance (according to the logic that if something is under debate in parliament, then it must be significant).

The parliamentary group 'Stop Gender Ideology!' held eight meetings from its foundation in January 2014 until the end of the seventh parliamentary term. The last activity of the group was in February 2015, which points to a loss of interest in the topic (2015 parliamentary elections were held in October). In fact, the 'war on gender' campaign seemed to wind down in the second half of 2015, with the electoral campaigns for two major national elections, the refugee crisis, and the final ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the *Sejm* and by the President in the spring of 2015 (cf. Duda 2016). This also suggests that the church was indeed looking for a story to divert attention from its internal scandals. When other narratives became available and when the novelty of the discourse wore off, the 'war on gender' lost some of its function as the primary scaremonger and became less useful to its advocates as a method of mobilizing fear and discontent.

The parliamentary group on 'Counteracting the Atheization of Poland' was another institutional proponent of the anti-gender discourses in parliament. In January 2014, its MPs invited the most famous church expert specializing in exposing the workings of 'gender ideology' to hold a lecture at the *Sejm*. Dariusz Oko held a two-hour presentation on the 'dangers of gender ideology and gender mainstreaming'. Oko told the deputies that 'gender is the main anti-christian ideology' and hates the church. He argued that 'gender ideology' comes from the same source as the ideology of Pol Pot;

both draw from the ‘atheist philosophy of Sartre’. Oko focused also on sexuality; he claimed that ‘sex can become important for some people, especially atheists’, who become ‘sexual maniacs’, which, according to him, explains ‘gender’. He painted a picture of a ‘genderist offensive’ that imposes gender everywhere through gender mainstreaming.¹²⁴

As one Polish scholar summarized: ‘The narrative of priest Oko provides an unrealistic image of the pervert-gay, the hysterical feminist, and the hyper-sexualized masturbating child, within an infertile crowd (...) [These figures] are supposed to inspire fear [and guard the condition of the true family]’ (Duda 2016: 208). Arguably, the showcasing of such rhetoric at the main discursive site of the country, co-constituted the political reality, in which the vision of gender imposed from the top (and through it equality and diversity) was alien and undesirable.

In parliament

Unlike in the previous chapters, the ‘war on gender’ discourse was advocated by only one side of the political spectrum in the Polish parliament. Only right-wing MPs were agents of this discourse in the seventh parliamentary term. The proponents came from Law and Justice, Solidarity of Poland, and Poland Together, which were all opposition parties. There was also clear support for and application of this discourse by PO’s junior coalition partner, the Peasant’s Party. This means that this was a narrative of a sizeable and vocal minority, which nonetheless managed to transform the social matrix of discourses in the parliament and gained significant prominence. PO, TR, and SLD deputies did not subscribe to the anti-gender mobilization and in fact actively tried to ridicule it. For instance, when a right-wing MP was making criticisms that were perceived as too broad and far-reaching, the TR deputy responded by saying ‘all you’re missing is gender ideology’ (Michał Kabaciński 20.02.2014, 61, 222). It was also used as an offhand comment when disparaging PiS-made amendments: ‘you spy gender in the work of the EU’ (Witold Klepacz 21.02.2014, 61, 263).

¹²⁴ The full lecture can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDMMuS32ysE> (accessed November 2016).

However, despite the ridicule aimed at ‘anti-genderism’ from the centrist and liberal side of the parliament at the level of discourse, the parliamentary votes were not as clear. While officially they did not use the ‘gender ideology’ discourse, some PO deputies did vote against the Istanbul Convention or against new anti-discrimination bills (enough to stall or stop the legislation). Therefore, even though they did not produce the discourse, PO MPs were active in implementing it through their legislative choices. This again points to the artificially constructed division that outlines PO as belonging to the neoliberal camp, and only PiS being the nationalist-catholic side. The reality was that both parties included agents of both discourses and their stand-off difference was a discursive construction produced for domestic political purposes.

Who and what is being talked about?

In parliamentary plenary debates, the ‘war on gender’ discourse surged especially in late 2013 and throughout 2014. Table 7.10 shows the topics of the debates in which this discourse was prominent during the parliamentary term under analysis. The list does not include every single use of the term ‘gender’, but focuses on the parliamentary agenda points that featured the ‘war on gender’ discourse as part of the main argument.

Table 7.10 ‘War on gender’ in the plenary debates of the Polish parliament

1.	Ratification of the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence	2014, 2015
2.	Honouring John Paul II	2014
3.	Education system reforms	2014
4.	Legislative proposal amending the Labour Code strengthening employees and preventing discrimination	2014
5.	National program combatting domestic violence	2014
6.	Parliamentary interpellations on ‘gender ideology’, questions to the government, and MP statements (4 separate motions)	2014
7.	Changes to the Criminal Code protecting minors from sexual harassment	2014
8.	Bill amending the anti-discrimination law	2013
9.	Sexual and equality education in schools	2013
10.	Report on the functioning of TV and radio	2013
11.	Children’s rights	2013
12.	Regulations concerning nurses and midwives	2013

(Source: own compilation).

The selected debates show that the rhetoric of ‘gender ideology’ was clearly associated with topics of children, education, women’s reproductive health, anti-discrimination, and anti-violence. Below, I analyse the specific discursive constructions used in the ‘war on gender’ narrative from the perspective of the above parliamentary debates.

What values and subjects are constructed?

Anti-violence

Since the ‘war on gender’ rose in conjunction with the political discussion of the Istanbul Convention, which aims to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, this area is the first focus of my analysis. Issues of domestic violence are discursively constructed in a peculiar way in the *Sejm* because they directly affect the most central and crucial social unit of the Polish nation, namely the family. As I have shown earlier, the discursive construction of family in Poland is essential to the reproduction of Polishness, but also to the enforcement of ‘traditional

values' in society. As such, policies perceived to directly affect the family are always treated suspiciously in parliament by MPs. This is highlighted in the debates on bills combatting and preventing domestic violence.

While all deputies unequivocally denounced violence (24.09.2014, 75, 102-134), they showed concern with new legislative proposals that were perceived to infringe on 'tradition'. The problematic article in the Istanbul Convention, as perceived by the speakers, was Article 12, which stipulates in §1: 'Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men.' Similarly, Article 12 §5 calls for: 'Parties [to] ensure that culture, custom, religion, tradition or so-called "honour" shall not be considered as justification for any acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.'¹²⁵

Within the debate on the anti-violence convention, MPs rallied against a perceived attack on the 'traditional Polish family' by particular forces that allegedly distorted reasons for domestic violence. 'The convention takes up the fight against violence only in one, (...) invented aspect, the fight against [our] understanding of masculinity and femininity (...) which it calls gender stereotypes' (Małgorzata Sadurska 24.09.2014, 75, 105). According to this narrative, anti-violence legislation was constructed as a trap aimed to exert foreign pressure on Poland to accept 'blindly and unreflexively' the 'ideological solutions that go against our values' (Małgorzata Sadurska 24.09.2014, 75, 106). The treaty was thus 'imposing a civilizational change' (Jarosław Górczyński 24.09.2014, 75, 107). Promotion of non-stereotypical gender roles was understood as the 'promotion of a gender definition of sex [*pleć*]' (Jarosław Górczyński 24.09.2014, 75, 107). The Istanbul Convention was described as dangerous and scandalous because it was directly attacking the christian faith and the definition of family (Dorota Wróbel 24.09.2014, 75, 111).

¹²⁵ The full text of the Istanbul Convention is available at: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e> (accessed June 2016).

Deputies rather pointed to alcohol and ‘social pathology’ as causes of domestic violence: ‘Why do the creators and lobbyists in favour of this convention point to traditional family as the basis for violence? Why do they not look for causes of violence and aggression in substance abuse, of alcohol for instance? Or drugs, medicines, work even, or in hypersexualization?’ (Małgorzata Sadurska 24.09.2014, 75, 105). MPs cited data that Poland has quite low rates of domestic violence. By manipulating statistics, they claimed that traditional Polish family is essentially good and violence-free. They argued that violence rates were highest in the countries that committed to fighting ‘stereotypical gender roles’ (Małgorzata Sadurska 24.09.2014, 75, 124).

Furthermore, right-wing MPs saw the Istanbul Convention as ‘smuggling’ foreign nefarious concepts that Polish family law does not include, such as that of ‘partners’ (Małgorzata Sadurska 24.09.2014, 75, 105). This was said to create ‘conceptual chaos’ and the ‘humiliation of marriage and family’ (Jarosław Górczyński 24.09.2014, 75, 107). Thus, the convention was seen as a tool ‘to pursue their [LGBTQ+] goals of marriage equality (understood as the destruction of ‘traditional family’) under the guise of combatting domestic violence. Therefore, the proponents of the convention were ‘genderists’ and the ‘homolobby’ that ‘stuff people’s heads with various issues [that are] depraving since school and kindergarten’ (Beata Kempa 24.09.2014, 75, 110). In the plenary debate, MPs constructed a parallel between Marxism-Leninism and the perceived ‘genderism’. The latter was said to replace class struggle with a struggle of the sexes (Tadeusz Woźniak 24.09.2014, 75, 123).

Significantly, there were clear racist connotations in the debates on the Istanbul Convention. In line with the observations of the previous chapters, ‘Polish’ is implicitly seen as good, therefore ‘traditionally Polish’ or even stereotypical Polish gender constructions are good, too. The MPs implied that the convention may be needed ‘elsewhere’, where people do not have such good ‘traditional values’. ‘Maybe in Istanbul, maybe in Arab countries, there are different traditions that need to be referred to, but from the Polish point of view, from the point of view of our culture and tradition’ domestic violence cannot happen within ‘our’ tradition (Franciszek Stefaniuk 24.09.2014, 75, 117). As Robert Telus (24.09.2014, 75, 121) put it: ‘not all

stereotypes are bad', implying that 'our' stereotypes are alright, while 'theirs' are bad. Here, 'theirs' refers to muslims and again reflects the attempt at *othering* them.

Gender equality and (anti-)discrimination

It is clear from the opening quote of this chapter that the proponents of the 'war on gender' discourse understand the notion of gender equality differently from gender scholars and feminist political scientists. As I discussed in chapter 5, MPs using the anti-gender discourses, conceptualize 'gender' as a permanent and god-given natural identity. Any attempt at subverting power relations exerted by this construction are considered a deadly threat. The understanding of 'gender' as the overwhelming tendency to force people to uniformize and homogenize according to an 'ideology' is tied to the misunderstanding of the tenets of gender equality policies, which postulate the abolition of hierarchal dependencies and advocate equality in diversity, not identity or forced assimilation. MPs resort to common sense arguments to prove their narrative: 'The use of words that are commonly understood differently is incomprehensible' (Andrzej Sztorc 20.06.2013, 44, 260).

From this perspective, equality discourses and anti-discrimination provisions were seen as means of censoring 'healthy' rejection of gender non-conformity or non-heteronormativity (Marzena Wróbel 20.06.2013, 44, 261). Superimposing categories of gender identity and expression on notions of sexuality is a technique employed in the 'war on gender' discourse. 'Gender ideology' constructs equality and diversity policies as aiming to subvert the members of the nation. It is presented as a temptation, an attack on the peaceful and harmonious collective (family and/or nation).

Children

The above features come into sharp focus around what Maciej Duda (2016: 23) calls the 'phantasm of a horrific threat' – the trope of the child in danger. This emotive construction is brought forward in all debates in which anti-gender discourses play a role. Through sexual and equality education, children are allegedly in danger of becoming transgender or homosexual. 'Gender' is equated with the notion of 'promotion of homosexuality' which threatens boys with becoming gay and girls with turning into boys. 'There will be those who will come up with the idea of being a girl in the morning, so they will be a girl from morning till evening, and if they come up

with the idea of being a boy in the evening, they will be a boy since the evening' (Beata Kempa 24.09.2014, 75, 110).

These conflations and meshing of terms built links between gender equality education and transsexuality or transgenderism (according to the logic that if gender roles are socially constructed then you can change them, if you can change gender, you can change sex). The rhetoric itself is not completely coherent: if homosexuality and transsexuality can spread or be chosen, then how does that fit with the permanent and unchanging sexual identities and natural gender roles that anti-genderists want to maintain and protect? It is difficult to say whether, according to this reasoning, it is nature or culture that has a bigger impact on gender and behaviour. Either god and nature give people one stable gender, or we assume that people freely decide and change. Nonetheless, the essence of the narrative was scaremongering against transsexual and transgender people, by implying that the masculinity given by nature can be lost and diluted under the influence of 'gender ideology' (Duda 2016: 29).

How is truth created?

In comparison to the anti-feminist and 'anti-communist' discourses of the 1990s, the war on gender has several new features, even though the techniques of their deployment are similar. As in the 1990s, it is mostly used by right-wing and conservative forces strongly aligned with the catholic church. The agents of the anti-gender discourses repeat the same word formulations and linguistic structures without defining or explaining them. It is more a technique of 'hammering the message home' rather than convincing through examples and argumentation. The logic came from and was exactly imposed as catholic dogma, in which the truths presented by church officials and doctrine are supposed to go uncontested and unquestioned. As seen above, there is a strong reference to 'natural law', which is conflated with 'god's law'; anything that is perceived to threaten the traditional way advocated by the users of this discourse is 'against nature'.

As we have seen in the previous section, 'gender' and 'gender ideology' are blamed for: divorce ('destruction of traditional Polish family'), child abuse (children seek love

outside of broken family), and the low fertility rates ('civilization of death': abortion, contraception, patchwork families). Accordingly, the associated 'homopropaganda' or 'gay lobby' ('homolobby') is contagious; it spreads and teaches homosexuality (by advocating civil unions aiming to destroy families). The strong affective component of this discourse ensures the maintenance of stereotypical judgements that lead to labelling, discrimination, fear, and negative associations.

Polish scholars have pointed to parallels between the homophobic/anti-gender discourses today and the old anti-Semitic discourses that have been present in the country for much longer ('gay is the new Jew') (Graff 2013). According to this logic, LGBTQ+ people are the new *other* and are discursively constructed according to the same linguistic and power structures as the Jewish *other*, who had always been placed in opposition to the 'catholic Pole' (Graff 2013; Mroziak 2014). These strong racist and nationalistic overtones (as we see for example in the cited statement by archbishop Jędraszewski) create moral panic over people switching their 'natural' gender roles, and thus allegedly making the nation and the white race disappear.

The fact that 'gender' itself was used by these discourses in its original English spelling and pronunciation allowed for misuse and misinterpretation. The crafting of neologisms such as the 'sexualization of children'; 'genderism' (made to sound like Marxism-Leninism); 'gender ideology' (the concept 'ideology' has negative and decisively derogatory connotations in Polish and is unequivocally associated with Nazism, totalitarianism, and communism, or Stalinism); 'homo-relations' (*homorelacje*, meant in a derogatory way) led to an incomprehensible concoction of nefariously sounding terms for average listeners. In addition to the creation and playing on the tropes discussed here, the anti-gender discourse relies on labelling, instrumentalizing, and offending. It is paired with the already well-established vilification of feminism (constructed as a feature of Bolshevism or Marxism).

Significantly, pornography and paedophilia are equated to gender, which in the context of the problems of the Polish catholic church with paedophilia shifts the blame away from the church hierarchy. The fascination and preoccupation with sexuality and sexual behaviour throughout the ages by celibate catholic priests has already been a topic of many analyses (cf. Federici 2004). Here again, we witness clergy talking about

sexual behaviours and claiming the sole moral authority on the issue. Sexual education and reproductive health matters are presented as perverseness (leading to the said sexualisation). Constant references to masturbation (in children) and genitals (presented as something obscene and depraving) are prevalent.

The result of these discursive concoction was confusion among the Polish public. A street survey conducted by a private TV channel in December 2013, showed how effective and widespread the reception (consumption) of this discourse was. People were asked what gender was, and most respondents answered: ‘something unspeakable’, ‘something foreign’, ‘something hurting children’, ‘something bad for society’. While many respondents were visibly over fifty or sixty years old, the same answers came from several younger ones too.¹²⁶

What can and cannot be said?

The ‘war on gender’ discourse rapidly extended in the virtual sphere and the media. Numerous political experts and commentators who influence the Polish internet sphere and social media are religious and ultraconservative. In the years of subsequent PO-PSL governments (2007-2015), these media specialists created and established their own reputation as ‘unsubdued’ and ‘rebellious’ that tell the ‘real truth’ (as opposed to the public television at the time and the liberal private channels). These right-wing commentators and their huge prominence in mainstream discourse have added to the dissemination of the anti-gender positions. For instance, Tomasz Terlikowski has propagated the church position by frequently writing and speaking on television about the issue:

There is and there cannot be any doubt that genderism is another form of the old, well-known Marxism. Both want to create a new man that will be free of ‘religious slavery’ and marriage. (...) Slowly the right of parents to raise their children according to their own (and not state) norms is taken away. The ‘fastening’ of the family is destroyed step-by-step and is replaced with the sanctioning of shacking up [used a derogatory idiom in Polish] or homo-relations [sic!] which are even given the right to adopt children. (...) Gender

¹²⁶ The full video ‘What is gender?’ can be viewed on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GVAiYIUwHg> (accessed November 2016).

ideology is in complete opposition to Christian anthropology. So a woman cannot be a priest, just as a man cannot be a mother. And gender analyses cannot change that. No one can take a woman's role in giving birth as well as giving the children that special kind of maternal tenderness and creating the 'home nest' for the husband and the children. Likewise, no one can replace the man in the building of safety and providing. The tales that social roles are interchangeable and that every family has the right to change them won't do anything. Because a man is this way and a woman is different and hysterics or ideology won't change it.¹²⁷

At the same time television debates often pitted such speakers against feminists to set up on-screen brawls. Such debates were futile and showed people that staying safe in the middle ground and not becoming involved is the best solution not to get into irresolvable discussions on morality.

The Polish academic and feminist scene tried to respond to this discourse and rebuke it. There were several comprehensive publications on the topic of 'gender'.¹²⁸ However, these arguments have not managed to gain much traction among the wider society. Polish feminists have also been trying to contextualize the current war on gender and explain why it has been waged now. As I mentioned before, the discourse is seen as a part of a scapegoating campaign. The church was looking for an enemy, because arguably it is at its strongest when it has an outside enemy to rally against (like in state socialist times).

Thus, the church created a siege mentality because their perceived 'power over souls' is in crisis (Graff 2014). During the same parliamentary term, there have been accusations of rampant fraud in the earlier reprivatisation processes, so people are growingly unhappy with the fact that the church meddles in politics and has a say in social and family policy (as well as even giving opinions on local government appointments). Moreover, the church is trying to cover up paedophilia scandals by shifting attention away from themselves, especially in the light of the apparent

¹²⁷ Source available at: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,15205958,Tomasz_Terlikowski_porownuje_gender_do_komunizmu_.html (accessed November 2016).

¹²⁸ Important contributions included the edited volume by Krytyka Polityczna *Gender. Przewodnik Krytyki Politycznej* (2014) and the collected encyclopedic anthology of entries on the central topics and themes of gender studies: *Encyklopedia gender. Płeć w kulturze* (2014) and Maciej Duda's comprehensive analysis of anti-gender publications, *Dogmat płci* (2016).

teachings of pope Francis, which most of the Polish Episcopate is not happy about – considering him oddly liberal and not deferent enough to ‘The Pope’ (Karol Wojtyła).

Historically, feminist scholars argue, the church wants to keep the power over women and their bodies as well as police sexuality (which people are realizing is more fluid and contested than the religious teachings allow) (Środa 2009; Duda 2016). At the height of the ‘war on gender’ campaign, the Polish church also aimed to show politicians its power before upcoming elections (regional and European in 2014, parliamentary and presidential in 2015), a power display technique that had worked in previous elections. Politicians also needed a scapegoat to divert people’s attention from economic hardship, hence they followed the church’s finger pointing.

In the edited volume on the topic (Kováts and Põim 2015), Weronika Grzebalska has argued that anti-genderism is rather a ‘symbolic glue’ which lumps together various progressive issues under one umbrella term, and consolidates different conservative actors in a much bigger quest to change the values underlying the European liberal democracy. As such, the anti-gender mobilization is not ‘just’ a feminist issue, but rather one threatening liberal democracy and making much broader and deeper changes to our political system (Grzebalska 2015; Kováts and Põim 2015).

Conclusions

The narrative of the ‘war on gender’ is a new addition to the previous anti-feminist discourses that have been present in Eastern Europe since 1989 and were connected to the purging of perceived state socialist practices. The recent anti-gender discourse was church-driven, but was willingly followed by Polish politicians. This chapter highlighted the virulence of this discourse and the commitment with which it has been applied in politics. In parliament, the discourse was most clearly visible in topics relating to children, education, women’s reproductive health, anti-discrimination, and anti-violence. The anti-gender discourse was successful in overpowering and repressing the advocacy of arguments that might be labelled as ‘feminist’ or ‘gendered’, thereby discarding or pushing women’s and LGBTQ+ rights topics down on national parliamentary agenda. The result of this is at best ridiculing these themes,

at worst treating them as dangerous, with MPs not willing to risk their political authority for progressive legislative projects.

As a result, the ‘war on gender’ narrative produced and reinforced an exclusionary discursive situation, in which the minorities have to see themselves with reference to the majority and explain their difference. This objectified the ‘odd’ ones that did not fit the discursive norm. They are orientalised and *othered*, which cements the majority in their norm hierarchy (cf. Duda 2016). The creation of derogatory labels for people who raise feminist and sexual minority concerns has produced more room for hate speech in the parliament and outside it. The war on gender also saw the centrist parties shifting towards the right on relevant topics. In fact, during the seventh parliamentary term no progressive legislation on women’s and LGBTQ+ issues was passed until the immediate pre-electoral period, when PO feared losing votes of the liberal-centre. However, by mid-2015 it was too late for such moves: the normalization and legitimization of the anti-gender discourse was in full swing and, as we have seen, has become mainstream political practice since the October 2015 parliamentary elections.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

'I'm terribly Polish and yet so terribly mutinous against Poland'
Witold Gombrowicz¹²⁹

The dissertation explored the discursive construction of subjects and values in the Polish parliament in three focus areas. One of the key aims was to trace the trajectories of Europeanization in Poland and identify the post-transformation legacies that influence the mechanisms of discursively producing subjects and values in Polish politics today. Through a synthetic analysis of the various fields of domestic political discourses, the thesis also examined why and how gendered discourses construct exclusion and social marginalization in the Polish case. I argued that transformation and Europeanization processes were implemented as forces of neoliberal economic globalization in Poland. While creating actual economic and political losers (women, former public employees, former working class, public sector workers), these phenomena also provided discursive bases and the scope and limitations of political language in Poland. Hence, post-transformation language of mainstream political debate in Poland remains stigmatizing, hierarchical, and exclusionary, discursively constructing categories of subjects and values that 'lose' in parliamentary politics. The analysis showed that the gendered discursive constructions employed and deployed in the Polish parliament continually reproduce subjects and values in the form of patterns of domination and inequality.

The power of the hegemonic discourses on masculinity, femininity, and heteronormativity prescribes a set of social relations in the family and the nation. The hegemonic discourses in Poland deploy gendered notions of subjectivity and values in ways that perpetuate catholic and conservative social conventions and channel social discontent towards particular social groups (i.e. women, ethnic and sexual minorities, etc.). These hegemonic narratives provide a ready framework of exclusion and marginalization that allows for scapegoating and using whole groups and categories of minorities for political expediency when popular anger or discontent needs to be

¹²⁹ 'Mnie, który jestem okropnie polski i okropnie przeciw Polsce zbuntowany', quote from *Dzienniki* 1953-1956 (1986) by Witold Gombrowicz.

rerouted. Therefore, the exclusionary and categorizing nature of the hegemonic discourses, as well as the ready availability of inferior discursive subjectivities (go-to frames of meaning), has enabled the outbreak and viral spreading of the ‘war on gender’. The Polish political discursive field is rife with stigma and inequality; the dominant framework of debate entrenched in the post-transformation politics was based on exclusion and inequality.

Discursive inequality and marginalization in Poland: revisiting the research puzzle

The initial empirical motivation for this research was the observation of the daily sexism, chauvinism, xenophobia, and often dehumanizing language of Polish politics with regards to numerous minority groups in society, as well as the disjuncture of this language from the legislative attempts at progressive change, especially for women. The questions I asked were: what is the role of gender in the construction of discursive exclusion and marginalization? Why and how do the gendered discourses construct subjects and values? What is the relationship between these discourses and the processes of democratization and Europeanization? The dissertation argued that the post-1989 political and economic changes have not transformed the underlying gender relations in the country, but allowed for the addition of new forms of exclusion and disenfranchisement of significant groups in the state and its politics. I argued that this discursive impunity frame comes as a continuity and a legacy of the way transformation and Europeanization were enacted in Poland.

Gender has been deployed and discursively inscribed in the solidification of nationalist-catholic thinking structures. The discursive message of equality was pushed out and displaced by unattainable ultraconservative social requirements, portraying those who do not fulfil these stringent models of subjectivity as political ‘losers’. Throughout the transformation process and later, during Europeanization, certain discursive categories of subjects were placed in the position of being ‘losers’ in the Polish social and political system. The scapegoating was enacted in part through a nationalist and ultra-catholic rhetoric which provided sources and go-to frames of meaning for Polish politics. The discussion in chapter 4 has also provided evidence

that neoliberal transformation processes have exacerbated inequalities after the fall of state socialism and pointed to an important connection between the portrayal of socio-economic problems as ‘cultural wars’. In the post-state socialist period, societal anger with economic disenfranchisement was taken over and exploited by nationalist and catholic political forces in Poland (cf. Ost 2005), which comes across clearly in the empirical analysis of debates in the fields of family and nation of this dissertation.

The specific notions of gendered subjectivities such as femininities, masculinities, and heteronormativity were put to work by the two main post-Solidarity camps of Polish politics (the neoliberal one, represented by some PO MPs in the parliamentary term under analysis, and the national conservative, headed by PiS). In this context, the changes to the labour and criminal codes favourable to women between 2011 and 2015 can be seen as paying token ‘lip service’ to ‘liberal European values’ by the neoliberal camp. However, and most significantly, the dominant discourse surrounding the themes of family- and nation-building, which are crucial for the construction of subjectivities that I explore here, was the nationalist-catholic one.

By examining the deployment of gender in the exclusionary discourses in the Polish parliament, I argued that Polish politicians continually reproduce existing patterns of domination and inequality, thus paving the way for the anti-gender and anti-equality mobilizations that Poland witnessed for example in the form of the ‘war on gender’ (2012-2014). The thesis approached the issue first from a more global and Eastern European perspective, before focusing in on Poland as a case, and on Polish parliamentary discourses as the crucial site of national politics. I argued that Poland’s recent campaign of ‘war on gender’, while following wider global backlash trends, proved that the post-1989 political and economic regime did not transform the underlying gender relations in the state and its politics.

Debates in the seventh parliamentary term reveal that the ruling elites are split in how they consider the transformation processes. The first group, in government in the term under discussion, sees it as a major success. According to this faction, the transformation was an act of ‘creative destruction’ or a war of good against evil, which required sacrifice and ruin – in other words, a move from hell through purgatory to

heaven, so that improvement and civilizing progress could take place (cf. Charkiewicz 2006; Sowa 2011, 2015). On the other hand, the second group views transformation and Europeanization as a betrayal of the 'anti-communist' struggle. The nationalist discourse and its promises of more justice and dignity mobilizes well-known reference points, gives hope to the disadvantaged along with a sense of identity and community constructed along ethno-nationalist and religious lines. They entice the ones disenchanted and abandoned by neoliberal reforms, even though practically they do not reject the neoliberal market logic and allow for its further implementation under different, more nationalistic forms of control.

The theories of marginalization and their manifestations in post-transformation Poland

The dissertation has set out to connect conceptual constructions of social and political scapegoats, as seen in different scholarly literatures (chapter 2), with the politically and historically outlined 'losers' of the post-1989 transformation mechanisms (chapter 4) in order to explore how they play out in current discourses in Poland (chapters 5, 6, and 7). According to feminist analyses, categories of women are *othered* and marginalized in national construction projects, especially when these are conducted by right-wing and ultraconservative forces (McClintock 1991; Verdery 1996; Walby 1996; Graff 2001, 2008a, b; Yuval-Davis 2001). Similarly, postcolonial and dependency theories applied to the post-state socialist context demonstrate that particular groups of employees are 'racialized' and marginalized based on the neoliberal market-efficiency principles; this was visible also in the process of transformation in Poland and in the region more broadly (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991; Ost 2005; Charkiewicz 2006; Klein 2007; Bobako 2011; Leder 2014; Sowa 2011, 2015). Feminist political economy exposes the role of the capitalist private-public division in devaluing women's care work, thereby placing them at the losing end of the globalized economy (True 2010; Rai and Waylen 2014). Meanwhile, in keeping with the feminist institutionalist insights, the 'rules of the game' in parliament are not benignly gender-neutral and play in favour of a specific type of masculinity (Mackay et al. 2010; Krook and Mackay 2011). As I showed through the example of the Polish Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, the enactment of formal

gender equality institutions does not explicitly mean breaking the political habits of inequality (see chapter 4 discussion).

The application of these conceptual facets of ‘losers’ to the Polish case of transformation allows us to see how the changes after 1989 led to repeated and negative reconfigurations of inclusion and equality. Because transformation and Europeanization were implemented most comprehensively in the economic sphere through the adoption of neoliberal market reforms such as structural adjustment measures, privatization, and the scaling down of social benefits (Bobako 2006), they created considerable social and economic inequalities (Sowa 2015). They also delineated lines of exclusion by producing large groups of disenchanted and disgruntled people and by raising the levels of political discontent (Ost 2005). The deployment of nationalist-catholic discourses provided an answer to this discontent and pointed to a culprit in the form of Europe and its allegedly decadent social values (Leder 2014). Notions of gender equality and diversity fell victim by association, as this attitude has brought on a virtually automatic opposition to norms and policies promoting gender equality.

Both in the 1990s (the pre-accession years) and following EU membership, governments and parliaments in Poland have shown an ambivalent position in terms of their commitment to implement gender equality and anti-discrimination policies. Because the adoption of EU gender equality directives and gender mainstreaming was considered a ‘package deal’ with EU accession, Polish politicians formally adopted them (Rutkowska 2008; Zbyszewska 2014). However, despite the formal transposition into domestic law and *pro forma* implementation, not much was actually done to entrench equality and anti-discrimination values institutionally or practically in society. Such a formal and, most importantly, *foreign* imposition left gender equality open for attack from the nationalist-religious camp in Polish politics.

Moreover, as I have argued, the processes of transformation and Europeanization were not a straight-line teleological progression. Some improvements and positive developments in terms of inclusion, political and civil rights, and gender equality happened at the same time as the backlash did. In this context, nothing was done by

the neoliberal camp to counter the Eurosceptic groups in Polish politics that successfully mobilized and organized the anger of the losing groups of transformation. The thesis argued that this indifference has paved the way for the current dismantling of the already weak pre-existing institutional guarantors of anti-discrimination and equality, using an ‘anti-gender campaign’ that later became central in Polish political discourse.

Contributions

Based on the outcome of this research, the dissertation makes the following contributions to feminist political science and area studies research. Firstly, by applying and elaborating the gendered analysis to politics and discourse, the thesis reinforces an argument that feminist political scholars have long held, namely that social phenomena cannot be fully explained without taking gender into account. Thus, the work that gender does in politics in utilitarian terms is twofold. While it follows path-dependent developments and is subject to local, temporal, and spatial conditions, gender is also used and deployed in discursive power projects by politicians very purposefully. The thesis has demonstrated that gender is a constitutive part of a set of processes that collectively create a highly hierarchical social and political reality. This gendered discursive reality constrains political and social outcomes, and discursively restricts people’s control of their lives on biological, social, and psychological levels (cf. Foucault 1980).

The second main theoretical contribution of my dissertation lies in the exploration of trajectories and legacies of transformation and Europeanization. I elucidated the impact of gendered discourses on processes of democratization and the broader regional trends of ultraconservative backlash against gender equality and diversity, as seen within the context of wider centrifugal forces in Europe (including Eurosceptic, nationalist movements, anti-democratic mobilizations, and the general spread of anti-elite feelings). The thesis has argued that there are lacunae in the existing literature that prevent the full explanation of why a state that is considered to be successful in terms of regime change, economic performance, and overall democratic transformation has not improved significantly in terms of gender equality, social

inclusion, and tolerance for diversity. To address the gap in the scholarly literature, I argued that a combination of transnational and Polish literature, together with personal ‘local’ experience, was necessary.

By complementing the different bodies of literature and using them to analyse the key mechanisms of discursive production, reproduction, and backlash in gendered terms, I argued for the need of a multi-faceted conceptual approach to the study of post-transformation politics in Eastern Europe. The combination of feminist, postcolonial, political economy, institutionalist, and nationalism literatures constitutes the main theoretical contribution. The aim was to ‘fill’ these theories with Polish context and research. I explored the national and regional trends that are specific to post-state socialist societies, moving between different layers and levels in order to combine comparative and regionalist literature with feminist, postcolonial, institutionalist, and democratization theory. From the perspective of feminist academic debates, the research confirms the need to look at ‘multiple inequalities’. The thesis, therefore, provided a synthetic way of engaging with (post-)transformation legacies and with critical junctures in terms of Europeanization and its impacts on gender equality. In so doing, it reinforced the need to look at the discursive level of inequalities, shifting the attention somewhat from policy adoption and implementation.

The third main contribution of the dissertation lies in the methodological application and operationalization of critical discourse analysis to the study of Polish institutions. Specifically, I reflected on and applied the understanding that specific notions of politics reproduce particular kinds of gendered subjects; for instance, the ways in which femininities, masculinities, and heteronormativity are produced as part of the political process in the case of Poland (cf. Saward 2010; Childs and Webb 2012; Celis et al. 2013). The dissertation showed that dominant discourses about gender and sexuality and path-dependent historic and economic legacies shaped, and most notably constrained Polish gender equality policies (cf. Lombardo and Forest 2012; Celis et al. 2013). While trying to avoid the Western ‘orientalizing’ gaze on the Polish discourses, the highly controversial nature of Polish gendered discourses was highlighted, in line with the strongly feminist normative assumptions and the interpretative epistemology of the dissertation.

On the empirical level, the thesis highlighted the prominence of gendered discursive processes, by capturing the Polish parliament as a time- and space-specific institutional snapshot and providing it with historic and social context. The dissertation has shown that the processes of Europeanization and democratization, as applied in Poland with a specific neoliberal market focus, stressed the implementation of formal legal and economic issues and left ultraconservative forces, particularly the catholic church, to define the values and subjects. I argued that the central role of the catholic church in the Polish political context is what makes the case singular in the European scenario. The social influence and deeply conservative discourse emanating from the Polish catholic church help explain why the backlash against gender equality was particularly strong in Poland.

At the same time, the fact that the ‘war on gender’ appeared almost simultaneously in several countries points to the purposeful deployment of anti-gender equality and anti-diversity mobilizations as cyphers for a broader backlash against globalization processes. While it is an empirically valid case on its own, Poland is also part of wider regional and global backlash trends. The dissatisfaction with domestic politics, disappointment with EU membership and austerity neoliberal politics are significant forces at work in more than one European country. The Polish case is distinct, but it should also be seen as part of the bigger anti-liberal democracy and anti-globalization backlash in Russia, Hungary, Great Britain, France, and the US (cf. Isaac 2017). As I discuss below, future literature could explore in-depth the actual interconnections between these national cases.

Subjects and values encoded and reproduced in the family and in the nation

The discursive codes of social value assigned to certain subjectivities (and by association to gendered bodies) are embedded within constituent discourses of family and nation. The subjectivity model that is discursively propounded by the 2011-2015 *Sejm* is that of a useful, enterprising man, a patriot-catholic, that is an obedient and eager entrepreneur multiplying wealth. By his side is his church-sanctioned, nuclear, and heteronormative family. As I showed in chapter 5, in parliamentary discourses

family means marriage and marriage can only be heterosexual. At the centre of the 'family values' debate lies the imagined traditional family ideal. Created by blood and marital ties, ideal families consist of heterosexual couples that produce their own biological children. Such families have a specific authority structure: a father-head figure earning an adequate family wage, a stay-at-home wife, and children (cf. Collins 1998). Hence, in post-transformation Poland the idea of family appears to imply an essential call for marriage and childbearing.

While in the Polish parliament of 2011-2015 it is no longer perceived as acceptable to advocate openly and directly the male-breadwinner and female-homemaking model only, the underlying broader gendered division between the public and the private is present in discursive constructions. There is, however, an implied welfare model, which seems to assume two-earners in the family. Given the pro-natal stress that is clear in Polish family debates, the assumption is that women both work and have children. In the context of welfare and especially care work, this completely overlooks the reality that most women in Poland are secondary wage-earners, who most often quit their jobs when their children are born, or other dependants need care. It also ignores the reality of the seriously lacking public and free care infrastructure in Poland, which is another post-transformation legacy. There are not enough places for children in kindergartens and pre-schools, while central budget funding and access to public care for the elderly and the handicapped is extremely limited. This leads to a situation of discrimination against people with lower economic status. More than implying a modified male breadwinner model, the Polish case seems to point to a complete unwillingness to address the actual implications of the dual-earner model when it is combined with a strict division between the private and the public spheres. This marks a continuity and perhaps a legacy from state socialist times, when women's practically full employment did not entail a reconfiguration of reproductive and care work roles.

The right-wing and centrist deputies who idealize the traditional family as a private haven from a public world see family as held together by primary emotional bonds of love and caring. This falls well in place with the division into the private reproductive sphere and the public productive sphere. Assuming a relatively fixed sexual division of labour, wherein women's roles are defined as primarily at home and men's in the

public world of work, the traditional family ideal also assumes the separation of work and family (Collins 1998). Defined as a natural or biological arrangement based on heterosexual attraction, this heteronormative monolithic family type is articulated through governmental structures and corresponds to the state-approved institutional norms, e.g. in the legislation on childcare, reproductive health, and the unwillingness to institutionalize same-sex relationships. It is organized not around a biological core, but a state-and church-sanctioned, heterosexual marriage that confers legitimacy not only on the heteronormative nuclear family structure itself, but on children born into it (Andersen 1991).

The analysis of the family and welfare debates in the thesis has shown that the patriarchal model of family does not only put women and men in particular subordinate power positions, but also creates a vertical axis of power between generations, especially between parents and children. Under the guise of freedom of views and respect for parental values, we see a perpetuation of the model wherein children are an extension of their parents in terms of opinions and worldviews. Whatever autonomy children might have, it is subservient to parents' autonomy, which restricts the rights of the former.

On a discursive level, Polish MPs are only interested in a particular type of family which reflects the supposed demographic interests of the nation. A 'strong' family is seen as the basis for a strong and 'healthy' nation. Formed through a combination of (preferably religious) marital and blood ties, the nation-state is conceptualized as a national family, with the traditional nuclear family ideal providing the standards used to assess the contributions of family members in heterosexual, married, opposite-sex couple households. Most notably, children and their safety and health become foundational for assessing group contributions to overall national well-being (Collins 1998). Polish MPs place themselves in the position to defend and speak for 'normal' families and the health and sanity of children. This strongly nativist narrative determines preferred societal structures and defines norm versus 'deviance'.

Naturalized hierarchies of the traditional family ideal influence constructions of first- and second-class citizenship (Collins 1998). First-class or primary subjectivity is discursively allocated to those who conform to the standard heteronormative, nuclear,

and child-producing family model. The aim of this family model in Poland is the biological growth of the catholic ethno-nation. A marriage is a family; a family cannot exist without a marriage. Any divergence from the ‘natural norm’ is underscored by revulsion and seen as subversive and threatening for society. At the same time, within this narrative, the most dominant feature of the Polish family is that it is permanently threatened. It is endangered by decadence, difference, and ‘deviance’ in the forms of abortion, civil partnerships, interference of foster care, anti-violence legislation and so on.

The hegemonic discourses describe clearly the Polish model of gendered subjectivity as unequivocally male. Masculinity is discursively constructed as a standard and blueprint for conduct by the Polish parliament. Furthermore, the political culture of the *Sejm* is catholicized and a lot of the symbolism used discursively draws on religious stylistics. The parliament displays traits of a particular hegemonic masculinity. This is so pervasive that it is practically invisible, making it seem neutral. As I showed in chapters 5 and 6, there is a tacit dominance and acceptance of male-dominated structures that presents itself as silence on gender.

Masculinity is discursively constructed as a blueprint for conduct and *modus operandi* in the Polish parliament. The hegemonic masculinity of the *Sejm* has specific traits. It is a discursive and institutional construct that it is both a product and a producer of catholic and ultraconservative worldviews. Any divergence from the ‘natural norm’ (which MPs often portray as ‘godly’) is seen as subversive and threatening for the Polish nation. While pretending to be ‘gender-neutral’, the informal institutional workings and discourses of the *Sejm* define the specific and conservative roles of women and men towards the fulfilment of what is constructed as the common good of the society. Thus, the main goal of family politics in Poland is the unpaid reproduction of the catholic nation through heteronormative family units.

Interestingly, there is no significant difference in male or female discourses within parliament; as many feminist scholars have shown, there is no proof of women acting for or speaking for other women. All political parties in the parliament use the hegemonic discourse of nationalism (or patriotism, as they refer to it). Moreover, there

is a certain ‘banality’ in terms of the genderedness of this patriarchal nationalism. Arguably, the impression is conveyed that women have little or no place in Polish subjectivity and historical celebrations. This is reflected in dominant masculinist constructions of the Polish state and its citizens. Polish deputies rarely refer to ‘Polish citizens’. Instead, words like ‘compatriots’ and ‘members of a nation’ or simply and most frequently ‘Poles’ are used.

Similarly, the word ‘state’ is often replaced with the word ‘nation’. In fact, the latter is far more frequent in all the debates under analysis. This exposes a 19th century vision of the state as the realization of territorial claims of a certain ethno-national group. The defining feature of a Pole is *his* heritage, in particular with regard to historic memory: the ‘debt of blood’ owed to the martyrs that gave their lives for the national cause, the renewed obligation to defend the catholic faith and national independence. Despite being inherently gendered in the anthropomorphic figures of *Polonia* and *Matka-Polka*, the Polish state paradoxically has no female political founding figures or commemorated seminal state-builders (Janion 1996, 2000, 2006; Gerber 2011; Hryciuk and Korolczuk 2012, 2015). In keeping with the insights of the literature on nationalism and gender, women either play a utilitarian role in the reproduction of the nation, or are allegories and national stand-in mythical figures, but have no place in active ‘patriotism’ of national commemorations and celebrations of events and achievements.

Hegemonic discourses in Polish parliament

It is significant that these discourses are widely accepted and never questioned. It means that no political force calls into question the dominant, masculinist constructions of national subjectivity and commemoration. Therefore, the Polish *Sejm* exhibits a particular type of institutional nationalism (cf. Larsen 2009). The idea of the Polish nation as an ‘imagined community’ (cf. Anderson 1993), unified in experiences, values and historical myths, dominates institutionally and can be traced in positions and discourses on national identity and welfare and family politics.

The discourses that were analysed show how the institutional nationalism of the Polish parliament creates and upholds mythical territories incarnating a specific Polishness to

be protected or promoted against the European other. When such beliefs are institutionalised and seen as national-cultural accomplishments, ensuing structural problems such as discrimination and segregation of particular social groups tend to be projected on the whole 'nation', rather than being attributed to specific socio-economic conditions. From the perspective of hegemonic discourses, the agents have no need of defining and differentiating the 'self' – thinking is through shortcuts and 'picklocks' – 'this is the way it is'. Gendered divisions of labour and social and family roles are defined along nationalist lines.

While the transformation, democratization, and Europeanization processes form a backdrop for the exploration of the discourses in parliament, gendered hegemonic discourses can become the bases or sources from which actors draw informal institutional behaviour. These discourses become so entrenched in parliamentary life and talk that they become ready, 'go-to' frames of meaning available to discuss any topic, without detailing the argumentations or understanding behind them. The hegemonic discourses are legitimized from two sides: from the catholic church and by neoliberal market ideology, which together dominate Polish politics. The imposition of a concrete language forces the audience and the consumers of the discourse unequivocal understandings.

Because political actors deploy such ready-made 'frames of meaning', they discursively enact, promote, and disseminate conservative gendered values and subjectivities through parliamentary discourse. The axiology of the message is clear. Being discursively orthodox and conservative with regards to gender equality and gender roles is an institutional norm in parliament. Despite there being a wide discrepancy between the declarations and practice of Poles, deputies largely depart from the more socially liberal and less stringent public; their behaviour and discourse appears to be more coherently conservative than Polish society at large. It seems that this is largely done to please the catholic clergy and receive its social and political endorsement (Graff 2008a; Środa 2009; Duda 2016). The analysis performed in the empirical part of this dissertation has shown the dominance of ultra-conservative, nationalist-catholic discourses in the fields of family and nation and their work in the reinforcement of inequalities politically. This is consistent with the closer inspection

of the progressive legislation passed during the seventh parliamentary term: the Istanbul Convention was only ratified in a last-ditch pre-election effort, while the childcare leave legislation offered a very conservative division of care work between the mother and the father (1 year for the mother versus 2 weeks for the father).

Counter-hegemony, re-hijacking, and subversion

It seems that subverting the dominant discourses is next to impossible for two mutually reinforcing reasons. Firstly, 'leftist' and liberal language does not raise positive emotions on a par with right-wing discourse. In Poland, the left symbolic has been overtaken, appropriated and rendered unappealing by state socialism. Moreover, political actors during and after the transformation have vilified and put people off anything labelled as 'left' or, even worse, 'communist'. Hence, the counter-hegemonic discourses have no symbolic power and do not raise or garner the same level of enthusiasm and ardour. For them to become more influential, there is a need to reimagine and redraw the lines that define terms like society, equality, tolerance, and inclusion. Secondly, as a consequence of both the transformation and Europeanization processes, the neoliberal market values have been so deeply internalized that they are dogma, part of seemingly neutral, common-sense politics in Poland. No one dares to subvert the 'infallible market logic'. The empirical analysis of the dissertation demonstrated that the hegemonic position of nationalist-catholic discourses is in many ways a response to the market forces and their consequences unleashed after 1989.

In Poland, the expectations regarding transformation and Europeanization were largely not fulfilled. Under the guise of democratization and 'European values', the notions of 'civilizing competences' (as opposed to 'communist' backwardness) of labour elasticity, mobility, rational cost-effectiveness, hyper-individualist success, and competitiveness have been deeply engrained into Polish politics and society. Language and discourse constantly try to build up binary oppositions between terms, where one term has the tendency to establish itself as the signifier that defines the pair, while the other becomes profiled as a mere negation of the first. As a result, whole social groups that could not adapt or attain the transformation criteria became the contempt-worthy 'losers' of the new system.

The constructed hierarchy meant that gender equality could never flourish in these conditions – when Europeanization and transformation were conducted under the auspices of leaving behind ‘bad’, ‘unnatural’, ‘communist’ ways (expressed as: passive, backward, collectivist, rigid, ‘restitutionary’, and state socialist). Transformation and ‘European’ values provided a supposedly ‘meritocratic’ way to explain away injustice and diminish the risk of social unrest through sexism (and classism) because people were told it was their own fault if they were unsuccessful (thus turning social anger inwards). Power defined the discursive fields of family and nation and what fitted in them, thereby reinforcing social segregation. In this context, the masses of losers in the game of inequality have either turned to nationalist-religious forces, which offer them tribal unity and dignity through Polish ethno-nationalist subjectivity, or have remained in inertia at the margins of society. Importantly, the ethno-nationalist discourse of dignity and strength produced its own ‘losers’ – women, gays, lesbians, feminists, non-binary people, queer groups, ‘leftists’, and atheists along with ethnic, religious, and racial *others*.

The ‘war on gender’ and beyond

The last empirical chapter of the dissertation went wider than the Polish context and brought in all the themes discussed in the earlier chapters in order to show the regional and global context of conservative-nationalist discourses in politics. Between 2012 and 2014 especially, Poland experienced an unprecedented discursive and institutional campaign of ‘war on gender’. The dissertation argued that the opposition to feminist and LGBTQ+-inclusive policies has been nothing new in the Eastern European region, nor globally. However, it stressed that we are experiencing a new quality of backlash in the recent years.

The period around the years 2012-2013 marked a significant turning point for the previously relatively stable human rights consensus in Europe. In several countries, gender equality, sexual education, and LGBTQ+ rights became the target of interrelated attacks conducted by religious officials, faith-based grassroots organizations, conservative civil movements, and right-wing politicians, and have been brought to unprecedented public attention lumped under the term ‘gender

ideology’ (or *théorie du genre* in France and *Genderismus* in Germany). As researchers from France, Germany, Poland and Slovakia have pointed out, while the term ‘gender ideology’ had sporadically appeared on the internet before, it only just recently entered public discourse in Europe (for more details see the edited volume by Kovats and Põim 2015). I have contributed to the analysis of this phenomenon by analysing the local context and trajectories that shape the ultraconservative and anti-feminist rhetoric and practices for the specific case of Poland (cf. Grabowska 2014).

As I argued in chapters 4 and 7, the recent anti-gender campaigns and the expanding role of the organized churches in the public sphere are certainly not the first signs of a backlash against women’s and sexual rights. Furthermore, these processes are not particular to any one domestic political arena. I followed Elżbieta Korolczuk (2015) in seeing the recent Polish ‘war on gender’ as part of the transnational process of backlash against women and sexual rights. However, I also argued that these discourses could be traced back to the historical moments that secured the unique position of catholic religion in Poland – one that allows its representatives to express their opinions and views from a position of power and to claim their indispensability to culture, society, and politics. Hence, such discourses are not new, but there is something particularly strong about them currently in Europe. Intertwining global and domestic features are at play.

In Eastern Europe progress in the field of gender equality has not only been rather stagnant and uneven (see chapter 4), but also much shakier and easier to reverse than activists and academics had imagined (Grzebalska 2016). Arguably, politicians needed a scapegoat in times of crisis to divert people’s attention from economic hardship, hence they followed the ultraconservatives’ finger pointing. As Weronika Grzebalska (2015) also claimed, anti-genderism can rather be conceptualized as a ‘symbolic glue’ which connects the rejection of various progressive issues under one umbrella term, and unites different conservative actors in a much bigger quest to change the values underlying the European liberal democracy. As such, the ‘war on gender’ is not a mere feminist issue, but rather one threatening the system of liberal democracy, a booby trap for making much bigger and deeper upheavals in the political system (Grzebalska 2015).

What comes clearly across in my analysis is the central and catalysing role of the catholic church in Polish politics. From substantial influence over legislation (which I discussed in chapters 4, 5, and 6) to the ‘war on gender’, catholic clergy have had a lot of input into the operation of formal Polish politics. The recent anti-gender mobilization in the country was church-driven; Polish parliamentarians followed willingly, perhaps in order to legitimize their own position in politics by endorsing the influential discourse of the church. The ‘war on gender’ in Poland impacted centrist parties in parliament, so that they shifted towards the right on relevant topics. In the seventh parliamentary term, there was no progressive legislation on women’s reproductive health and LGBTQ+ issues until the immediate pre-electoral period, when the ruling coalition was afraid of losing the votes of the liberal-centrist electorate. However, by mid-2015 it was too late for such moves: the normalization and legitimization of the anti-gender discourse was in full swing and it has become mainstream political practice since the 2015 parliamentary and presidential elections.

Future research agenda

The findings of this study could be a departure point for the analysis of wider forces that are pulling at the ‘European project’ based on the rejection of European values and integration. They point to a need to research the anti-equality backlash, and specifically the anti-gender mobilizations in Eastern and Southern Europe and cross-regionally. Despite both academic and activist commitment to respond to and analyse these developments, the phenomenon of anti-gender mobilizations is so recent that there is a real dearth of theoretical and comparative work that would elucidate the situation. Since Europe (and definitely Eastern Europe) has seen anti-feminist and anti-equality discourses and trends before, questions that can be explored further include: what is the European significance of the ‘war on gender’ today? Who is driving it politically?

The main issue is to investigate how much the anti-gender mobilizations in politics are a reaction to unrelated issues (for example, to cover up scandals within religious institutions, or distract the masses from economic problems) and how much it is an active and wilful policy by political actors? How does it compare across regions in

Europe? How can the backlash be conceptualized theoretically? What methods should be used to analyse it? And, most importantly, does it have to do more widely with the backlash against liberal democracy and its institutions in many European countries today? It is urgent to fill this gap by performing cross-regional comparative analysis of the ‘wars on gender’ as deployed in countries of Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe especially. There is a need to start building both theoretical and empirical connections that could allow progress in the exploration of resistance and backlash against equality policies in particular, but also more broadly against liberal democracy.

As far as the Polish case is concerned, my analysis can be seen as a departure point for the exploration of the current political situation. Following the October 2015 elections (won by PiS with a first-ever absolute majority in the post-1989 Polish parliament), it can be argued that the parliamentary term I studied can be seen as a *fin de siècle* moment. Arguably, it has paved the way for the now on-going dismantling of the legislative, institutional, and systemic guarantors of the division of powers, independence of the judiciary and the media as well as various human and environmental rights standards. In terms of anti-discrimination and equality, the anti-gender campaign showed how easy it is to use transformation legacies of anti-feminism and economic and social inequality to construct enemies of the nation. Since the fall of 2015, with the new right-wing-dominated parliament, the ‘war on gender’ has become the name of the game in the fields of family and welfare politics.

In the current parliamentary term (2015-2019), despite the highest number of female MPs in history (27% in the lower house and 13% in the Senate), the discourse and practice of ‘anti-genderism’ have become entrenched. There is even more focus than before on ‘catholic family values’ and ‘mothers’, which in practice has meant a significant rolling back of women’s and LGBTQ+ rights. For instance, the newly passed 2015 law allowing for easier administrative procedures for transsexuals was vetoed by the new PiS president Andrzej Duda.

Moreover, there was a new legislative proposal that would have completely banned and criminalized abortion, if passed in parliament. While the bill was rejected in the *Sejm* following mass women’s protests in October of 2016, within several weeks the PiS government legislated a new social bonus instead. The state is to make one-time

payments of 4,000zł (£770) if a woman decides to give birth to a disabled infant or one with a life-threatening disease, giving up the option of terminating the pregnancy (which in this case would be legal). If the child is stillborn, the state does not ‘compensate’ for carrying the pregnancy to term. The bonus does not apply to children who become handicapped or seriously ill after birth or whose defects were not diagnosed during pregnancy. This new state social policy is called ‘For Life’ (*Za życiem*).

Since the Fall of 2015, the public media, courts, administration, and all social and cultural programs are supposed to be ‘national’ (*narodowy*). The nationalist and ultraconservative response to neoliberal inequalities of post-transformation and globalization thus produced exclusion in the form of welfare chauvinism that again leaves out sections of society. IVF state budget funding has been withdrawn by the parliament at the state level. Budget funding for shelters and organizations helping women and children affected by domestic violence has also been withdrawn. The flagship welfare project of the Law and Justice government, called ‘Family 500+’, is very restrictive for single parents (mostly single mothers).¹³⁰ At the time of writing (December 2016), the media are speculating whether the PiS government will withdraw from the Istanbul Convention.¹³¹

Thus, future research avenues with regards to the Polish case would entail more ‘struggling with Polishness’ that the Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz alluded to in the opening quote of this chapter. However, an analysis of the post-2015 political, legal, and institutional changes in Poland would be called for, especially considering its relevance to the wider debates on the backlash against ‘political correctness’ and illiberal right-wing populism that are highly topical today.

¹³⁰ The program (in operation since spring 2016) gives Polish families a monthly allowance of 500 zł (PLN) – equivalent of around £96 – for every second and subsequent child up to the age of 18.

However, it introduces income limits for single parents to receive the money also for the first child.

¹³¹ For the full story see: <https://oko.press/pis-wypowiada-konwencje-antyprzemocowa-oficjalne-pismo-potwierdzily-sie-ostrzezenia-oko-press/> (accessed December 2016).

Appendix I: List of parliamentary debates included in the analysis

Family and welfare debates analysed in chapter 5:

	Agenda point and legislative proposal title	Plenary session number	Date	Parliamentary (legislative) reference number
1.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #4).	3	14-16 Dec 2011	Druki nr 38 i 67
2.	Informacja ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania o stanie przygotowań organów prowadzących do objęcia obowiązkiem szkolnym dzieci sześciolletnich wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży (agenda point #7).	8	15-17 Feb 2012	Druki nr 57 i 155
3.	Sprawozdanie Rady Ministrów z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" od 1 stycznia 2010 r. do 31 grudnia 2010 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #24).	9	28-29 Feb, 1-2 Mar 2012	Druki nr 48 i 158
4.	Informacja ministra pracy i polityki społecznej o skutkach obowiązywania ustawy z dnia 10 czerwca 2010 r. o zmianie ustawy o przeciwdziałaniu	9	28-29 Feb,	Druki nr 79 i 159

	przemocy w rodzinie oraz niektórych innych ustaw wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #25).		1-2 Mar 2012	
5.	Informacja rzecznika praw dziecka o skutkach obowiązywania ustawy z dnia 10 czerwca 2010 r. o zmianie ustawy o przeciwdziałaniu przemocy w rodzinie oraz niektórych innych ustaw wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #26).	9	28-29 Feb, 1-2 Mar 2012	Druki nr 47 i 157
6.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #6).	10	14-16 Mar 2012	Druki nr 177, 217 i 217-A
7.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie sprawozdania Rady Ministrów z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" od 1 stycznia 2010 r. do 31 grudnia 2010 r. (agenda point #14).	10	14-16 Mar 2012	Druki nr 48 i 158
8.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie informacji ministra pracy i polityki społecznej o skutkach obowiązywania ustawy z dnia 10 czerwca 2010 r. o zmianie ustawy o przeciwdziałaniu przemocy w	10	14-16 Mar 2012	Druki nr 79 i 159

	rodzinie oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #15).			
9.	Informacja Rady Ministrów o realizacji działań wynikających z "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania narkomanii" w 2010 roku wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Zdrowia (agenda point #15).	12	11-13 Apr 2012	Druki nr 36 i 231
10.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #15).	13	25-27 Apr 2012	Druki nr 313 i 334
11.	Informacja rzecznika praw dziecka o działalności za rok 2011 oraz uwagi o stanie przestrzegania praw dziecka wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #15).	17	26-28 Jun 2012	Druki nr 290 i 503
12.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #2).	20	29-30 Aug 2012	Druki nr 319 i 625
13.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o	21	11-14 Sep 2012	Druki nr 319, 625 i 625-A

	świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #25).			
14.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o planowaniu rodziny, ochronie płodu ludzkiego i warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży (agenda point #6).	22	26-28 Sep 2012	Druk nr 670
15.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie zakresu obowiązywania Konwencji o prawach dziecka, przyjętej dnia 20 listopada 1989 r. w Nowym Jorku (agenda point #9).	22	26-28 Sep 2012	Druki nr 490 i 700
16.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie zakresu obowiązywania Konwencji o prawach dziecka, przyjętej dnia 20 listopada 1989 r. w Nowym Jorku (agenda point #9).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druki nr 490 i 700
17.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie w pierwszym czytaniu poselskiego projektu ustawy o świadomym rodzicielstwie (agenda point #15).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druk nr 562

18.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie w pierwszym czytaniu poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o planowaniu rodziny, ochronie płodu ludzkiego i warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży (agenda point #16).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druk nr 670
19.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #24).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druki nr 212 i 574
20.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #32).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druki nr 771 i 775
21.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Zdrowia o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o planowaniu rodziny, ochronie płodu ludzkiego i warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży (agenda point#13).	24	23-24 Oct 2012	Druki nr 670 i 829
22.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #5).	25	7-9 Nov 2012	Druki nr 724 i 830

23.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #13).	26	15-16 Nov 2012	Druki nr 724, 830 i 830-A
24.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o senackim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #10).	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druki nr 893 i 930
25.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #27).	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druki nr 926 i 952
26.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach opieki zdrowotnej finansowanych ze środków publicznych oraz ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #4).	29	10-12 Dec 2012	Druki nr 856 i 929
27.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach opieki zdrowotnej finansowanych ze środków publicznych oraz ustawy o wspieraniu	30	12-14 Dec 2012	Druki nr 856 i 929

	rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #13).			
28.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej oraz Komisji Zdrowia o senackim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wychowaniu w trzeźwości i przeciwdziałaniu alkoholizmowi (agenda point #5).	31	3-4 Jan 2013	Druki nr 978, 1006 i 1006-A
29.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o związkach partnerskich (agenda point #17).	32	23-25 Jan 2013	Druk nr 552
30.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy Przepisy wprowadzające ustawę o związkach partnerskich (agenda point #18).	32	23-25 Jan 2013	Druk nr 553
31.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o związkach partnerskich (agenda point #19).	32	23-25 Jan 2013	Druk nr 554
32.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy Przepisy wprowadzające ustawę o związkach partnerskich (agenda point #20).	32	23-25 Jan 2013	Druk nr 555
33.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o umowie związku partnerskiego (agenda point #21).	32	23-25 Jan 2013	Druk nr 825
34.	Informacja ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania o stanie przygotowań organów prowadzących do objęcia obowiązkiem szkolnym dzieci sześciolletnich wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Edukacji,	34	19-22 Feb 2013	Druki nr 1019 i 1084

	Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej (agenda point #16).			
35.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie informacji ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania o stanie przygotowań organów prowadzących do objęcia obowiązkiem szkolnym dzieci sześciolletnich (agenda point #18).	35	6-8 Mar 2013	Druki nr 1019 i 1084
36.	Sprawozdanie Rady Ministrów z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" za okres od 1 stycznia 2011 r. do 31 grudnia 2011 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #15).	37	3-5 Apr 2013	Druki nr 971 i 1095
37.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie sprawozdania Rady Ministrów z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" za okres od 1 stycznia 2011 r. do 31 grudnia 2011 r. (agenda point # 23).	38	17-19 Apr 2013	Druki nr 971 i 1095
38.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o opiece nad dziećmi w wieku do lat 3 oraz ustawy o świadczeniach pieniężnych z ubezpieczenia	39	8-10 May 2013	Druki nr 1075 i 1284

	społecznego w razie choroby i macierzyństwa (agenda point #3).			
39.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy Kodeks pracy oraz ustawy o świadczeniach pieniężnych z ubezpieczenia społecznego w razie choroby i macierzyństwa (agenda point #1).	40	14 May 2013	Druk nr 1172
40.	Informacja Rady Ministrów o realizacji rządowego programu preferencyjnych kredytów mieszkaniowych "Rodzina na swoim" oraz zamierzenia w sprawie wprowadzenia po dniu 31 grudnia 2013 r. systemów wspierania rodzin w zaspokajaniu potrzeb mieszkaniowych wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Finansów Publicznych, Komisji Infrastruktury oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #16).	41	22-24 May 2013	Druki nr 1257 i 1259
41.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #2).	43	12-14 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1274 i 1376
42.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o senackim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1186 i 1460

	świadczeniach pieniężnych z ubezpieczenia społecznego w razie choroby i macierzyństwa (agenda point #5).			
43.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wdrożeniu niektórych przepisów Unii Europejskiej w zakresie równego traktowania oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #18).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druk nr 1051
44.	Informacja rzecznika praw dziecka o działalności za rok 2012 oraz uwagi o stanie przestrzegania praw dziecka wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #24).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1244 i 1425
45.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Finansów Publicznych oraz Komisji Infrastruktury o rządowym projekcie ustawy o pomocy państwa w nabyciu pierwszego mieszkania przez ludzi młodych (agenda point #1).	50	25-27 Sep 2013	Druki nr 1421, 1721 i 1721-A
46.	Pierwsze czytanie obywatelskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o planowaniu rodziny, ochronie płodu ludzkiego i warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży (agenda point #18).	50	25-27 Sep 2013	Druk nr 1654

47.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie informacji prezesa Rady Ministrów na temat sytuacji ludzi młodych w Polsce (agenda point #32).	50	25-27 Sep 2013	n/a
48.	Rozpatrzenie obywatelskiego wniosku o poddanie pod referendum ogólnokrajowe sprawy o szczególnym znaczeniu dla państwa i obywateli dotyczącej systemu edukacji - "Ratuj maluchy i starsze dzieci też" (agenda point #22).	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druk nr 1635
49.	Rozpatrzenie obywatelskiego wniosku o poddanie pod referendum ogólnokrajowe sprawy o szczególnym znaczeniu dla państwa i obywateli dotyczącej systemu edukacji - "Ratuj maluchy i starsze dzieci też" (agenda point #28).	53	6-8 Nov 2013	Druk nr 1635
50.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o uzgodnieniu płci (agenda point #6).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	Druk nr 1469
51.	Przedstawiony przez prezesa Rady Ministrów dokument: Informacja Rady Ministrów o realizacji w roku 2012 ustawy z dnia 9 czerwca 2011 r. o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalne (agenda point #25).	59	22-24 Jan 2014	Druki nr 1669 i 1801

52.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie przedstawionego przez prezesa Rady Ministrów dokumentu: Informacja Rady Ministrów o realizacji w roku 2012 ustawy z dnia 9 czerwca 2011 r. o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej (agenda point #22).	60	5-7 Feb 2014	Druki nr 1669 i 1801
53.	Informacja ministra właściwego do spraw oświaty i wychowania o stanie przygotowań organów prowadzących do objęcia obowiązkiem szkolnym dzieci sześciolatków wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej (agenda point #7).	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druki nr 1825 i 1897
54.	Rozpatrzenie poselskiego wniosku o zarządzenie ogólnopolskiego referendum w sprawie zniesienia obowiązku szkolnego sześciolatków (agenda point #8).	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druk nr 2022
55.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy Kodeks rodzinny i opiekuńczy (agenda point #6).	64	19-21 Mar 2014	Druk nr 2181
56.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #2).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druk nr 1766

57.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #3).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druk nr 1767
58.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o ustaleniu i wypłacie zasiłków dla opiekunów (agenda point #4).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druk nr 2252
59.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #7).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2254, 2257 i 2257-A
60.	Przedstawione przez Radę Ministrów sprawozdanie z wykonania ustawy z dnia 26 października 1982 r. o wychowaniu w trzeźwości i przeciwdziałaniu alkoholizmowi w okresie 1 stycznia - 31 grudnia 2010 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Zdrowia (agenda point #8).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druki nr 1998 i 2105
61.	Przedstawione przez Radę Ministrów sprawozdanie z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" za okres od 1 stycznia 2012 r. do 31 grudnia 2012 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #25).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druki nr 1950 i 2148
62.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2307 i 2326

	ustawy o świadczeniach rodzinnych (agenda point #17).			
63.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży o poselskim projekcie ustawy o edukacji seksualnej (agenda point #19).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 1298 i 1974
64.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie przedstawionego przez Radę Ministrów sprawozdania z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" za okres od 1 stycznia 2012 r. do 31 grudnia 2012 r. (agenda point #21).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 1950 i 2148
65.	Informacja o działalności rzecznika praw dziecka za rok 2013 oraz uwagi o stanie przestrzegania praw dziecka wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #8)	70	24-26 Jun 2014	Druki nr 2300 i 2451
66.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #26).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2532, 2532-A, 2630 i 2630-A
67.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o	75	24-26 Sep 2014	Druki nr 2681 i 2722

	ratyfikacji Konwencji Rady Europy o ochronie dzieci przed seksualnym wykorzystywaniem i niegodziwym traktowaniem w celach seksualnych, sporządzonej w Lanzarote w dniu 25 października 2007 r. (agenda point #12).			
68.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o ratyfikacji Konwencji Rady Europy o zapobieganiu i zwalczaniu przemocy wobec kobiet i przemocy domowej, sporządzonej w Stambule dnia 11 maja 2011 r. (agenda point #13).	75	24-26 Sep 2014	Druki nr 2515 i 2701
69.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Zdrowia o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach opieki zdrowotnej finansowanych ze środków publicznych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #18).	77	8-10 Oct 2014	Druki nr 2765 i 2785
70.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o emeryturach i rentach z Funduszu Ubezpieczeń Społecznych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #13).	78	21-23 Oct 2014	Druki nr 2782, 2820 i 2820-A
71.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o świadczeniach pieniężnych z	79	5-7 Nov 2014	Druk nr 2832

	ubezpieczenia społecznego w razie choroby i macierzyństwa oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #5).			
72.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o Karcie Dużej Rodziny (agenda point #32).	80	26-28 Nov 2014	Druk nr 2923
73.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o przeciwdziałaniu zagrożeniom przestępczością na tle seksualnym i o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #8).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druk nr 2859
74.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej o rządowym projekcie ustawy o Karcie Dużej Rodziny (agenda point #11).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2923 i 2958
75.	Przedstawiony przez prezesa Rady Ministrów dokument: Informacja Rady Ministrów o realizacji w roku 2013 ustawy z dnia 9 czerwca 2011 r. o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #12).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2713 i 2802
76.	Informacja rządu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej o działaniach podejmowanych w 2013 r. na rzecz realizacji postanowień uchwały Sejmu	82	16-17 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2611 i 2937

	Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 1 sierpnia 1997 r. Karta Praw Osób Niepełnosprawnych wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #10).			
77.	Sprawozdanie Rady Ministrów z realizacji ustawy z dnia 4 lutego 2011 r. o opiece nad dziećmi w wieku do lat 3 w latach 2011-2012 wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #4).	84	13-16 Jan 2015	Druki nr 1843 i 2127
78.	Sprawozdanie Rady Ministrów z realizacji ustawy z dnia 4 lutego 2011 r. o opiece nad dziećmi w wieku do lat 3 w 2013 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #5).	84	13-16 Jan 2015	Druki nr 2849 i 3021
79.	Sprawozdanie ministra pracy i polityki społecznej z realizacji programu wieloletniego "Pomoc państwa w zakresie dożywiania" za okres styczeń 2010 r. - grudzień 2013 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #13).	84	13-16 Jan 2015	Druki nr 2793 i 2947
80.	Przedstawione przez Radę Ministrów sprawozdanie z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" za okres od 1 stycznia 2013 r. do 31 grudnia 2013 r. wraz ze	84	13-16 Jan 2015	Druki nr 2851 i 2993

	stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #34).			
81.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o ratyfikacji Konwencji Rady Europy o zapobieganiu i zwalczaniu przemocy wobec kobiet i przemocy domowej, sporządzonej w Stambule dnia 11 maja 2011 r. (agenda point #27).	86	4-6 Feb 2015	Druki nr 2515, 2701 i 2701-A
82.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o emeryturach i rentach z Funduszu Ubezpieczeń Społecznych (agenda point #3).	88	3-5 Mar 2015	Druki nr 2651 i 3175
83.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o leczeniu niepłodności (agenda point #17).	90	8-9 Apr 2015	Druk nr 3245
84.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o pobieraniu, przechowywaniu i przeszczepianiu komórek, tkanek i narządów (agenda point #18).	90	8-9 Apr 2015	Druk nr 608
85.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o ochronie genomu ludzkiego i embrionu ludzkiego oraz zmianie niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #19).	90	8-9 Apr 2015	Druk nr 1107

86.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o świadomym rodzicielstwie (agenda point #20).	90	8-9 Apr 2015	Druk nr 1122
87.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Zdrowia o poselskim projekcie ustawy o uzgodnieniu płci (agenda point #4).	97	21-24 Jul 2015	Druki nr 1469 i 3648
88.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Zdrowia o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o uzgodnieniu płci (agenda point #28).	99	10-11 Sep 2015	Druki nr 3814 i 386.
89.	Pierwsze czytanie obywatelskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o planowaniu rodziny, ochronie płodu ludzkiego i warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #39).	99	10-11 Sep 2015	Druk nr 3806

Debates on the nation analysed in chapter 6:

	Agenda point and legislative proposal title	Plenary session number	Date	Parliamentary (legislative) reference number
1.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projektu uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Václava Havla (agenda point #1).	4	21-22 Dec 2011	Druk nr 94
2.	Pierwsze czytanie przedstawionego przez Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o godle, barwach i hymnie Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz o pieczęciach państwowych i ustawy o sporcie (agenda point #4).	4	21-22 Dec 2011	Druk nr 80
3.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Karola Józefa Lipińskiego (agenda point #10).	4	21-22 Dec 2011	Druki nr 87 i 95
4.	Pierwsze czytanie obywatelskiego projektu ustawy o powrocie do Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej osób pochodzenia polskiego deportowanych i zesłanych przez władze Związku Socjalistycznych Republik Radzieckich (agenda point #4).	5	11-13 Jan 2012	Druk nr 22

5.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej o pilnym rządowym projekcie ustawy zmieniającej ustawę o zmianie ustawy o systemie oświaty oraz o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #2).	6	25-27 Jan 2012	Druki nr 102, 113 i 113-A
6.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o skutkach powierzania wykonywania pracy cudzoziemcom przebywającym wbrew przepisom na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (agenda point #9).	6	25-27 Jan 2012	Druk nr 120
7.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 70. rocznicy powstania Armii Krajowej (agenda point #9).	8	15-17 Feb 2012	Druk nr 198
8.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Zygmunta Krasińskiego w 200. rocznicę Jego urodzin (agenda point #16).	8	15-17 Feb 2012	Druki nr 149 i 187
9.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury Fizycznej, Sportu i Turystyki o przedstawionym przez Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o godle, barwach i hymnie Rzeczypospolitej	9	28-29 Feb, 1- 2 Mar 2012	Druki nr 80, 191 i 191-A

	Polskiej oraz o pieczęciach państwowych i ustawy o sporcie (agenda point #2).			
10.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie sytuacji w Republice Białoruś (agenda point #14).	9	28-29 Feb, 1- 2 Mar 2012	Druk nr 227
11.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o cudzoziemcach oraz ustawy o promocji zatrudnienia i instytucjach rynku pracy (agenda point #3).	10	14-16 Mar 2012	Druki nr 206 i 233
12.	Informacja prezesa Rady Ministrów na temat projektu wdrażanego przez Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej, ograniczającego wymiar godzin lekcji historii w szkołach ponadpodstawowych (agenda point #8).	11	28-30 Mar 2012	n/a
13.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Jana Rybkowskiego w 100. rocznicę Jego urodzin (agenda point #14).	11	28-30 Mar 2012	Druki nr 184 i 242
14.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury Fizycznej, Sportu i Turystyki o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o godle, barwach i hymnie Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej	12	11-13 Apr 2012	Druki nr 273 i 301

	oraz o pieczęciach państwowych oraz ustawy o sporcie (agenda point #14).			
15.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o cudzoziemcach oraz ustawy o promocji zatrudnienia i instytucjach rynku pracy (agenda point #16).	13	25-27 Apr 2012	Druki nr 314 i 339
16.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o skutkach powierzania wykonywania pracy cudzoziemcom przebywającym wbrew przepisom na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (agenda point #4).	14	9-11 May 2012	Druki nr 120 i 357
17.	Pierwsze czytanie komisyjnego projektu uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia 18 kwietnia Narodowym Dniem Pacjenta w Śpiączce (agenda point #15).	14	9-11 May 2012	Druk nr 326
18.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o dokumentach paszportowych (agenda point #2).	15	23-25 May 2012	Druki nr 320, 394 i 394-A
19.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 75. rocznicy rozpoczęcia	15	23-25 May 2012	Druk nr 437

	budowy Centralnego Okręgu Przemysłowego (agenda point #28).			
20.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uchylenia rozporządzenia ministra edukacji narodowej z 23 grudnia 2008 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół (Dz. U. z 2009 r. Nr 4, poz. 17) oraz rozporządzenia ministra edukacji narodowej w sprawie ramowych planów nauczania w szkołach publicznych z dnia 7 lutego 2012 r. (agenda point #10).	16	13-15 Jun 2012	Druki nr 284 i 361
21.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o skutkach powierzania wykonywania pracy cudzoziemcom przebywającym wbrew przepisom na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (agenda point #18).	16	13-15 Jun 2012	Druki nr 445 i 468
22.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Andrzeja Frycza-Modrzewskiego w związku z 440. rocznicą śmierci (agenda point #19).	16	13-15 Jun 2012	Druki nr 300 i 419

23.	Sprawozdanie ministra spraw wewnętrznych z realizacji w 2011 r. ustawy z dnia 24 marca 1920 r. o nabywaniu nieruchomości przez cudzoziemców wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych (agenda point #23).	16	13-15 Jun 2012	Druki nr 303 i 358
24.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury Fizycznej, Sportu i Turystyki o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie nadania Stadionowi Narodowemu w Warszawie imienia Kazimierza Górskiego (agenda point #11).	17	26-28 Jun 2012	Druki nr 488 i 506
25.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie 90. rocznicy powrotu części Górnego Śląska do odradzającego się Państwa Polskiego (agenda point #17).	18	11-13 Jul 2012	Druki nr 575 i 578
26.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży o rządowym projekcie ustawy o nadaniu nowej nazwy Politechnice Radomskiej im. Kazimierza Pułaskiego (agenda point #6).	19	24-27 Jul 2012	Druki nr 495 i 558
27.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie hołdu wszystkim zamordowanym i represjonowanym na terenach Związku Radzieckiego w ramach	20	29-30 Aug 2012	Druk nr 687

	tw. Operacji Polskiej w latach 1937-1938 (agenda point # 19).			
28.	Informacja prezesa Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej o działalności Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej - Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w okresie 1 stycznia 2009 r. - 31 grudnia 2009 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka (agenda point #2).	21	11-14 Sep 2012	Druki nr 65 i 173
29.	Informacja prezesa Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej o działalności Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej - Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w okresie 1 stycznia 2010 r. - 31 grudnia 2010 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka (agenda point #3).	21	11-14 Sep 2012	Druki nr 66 i 174
30.	Informacja prezesa Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej o działalności Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej - Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w okresie 1 stycznia 2011 r. - 31 grudnia 2011 r. wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka (agenda point #4).	21	11-14 Sep 2012	Druk nr 328 i 415

31.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o likwidacji Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej - Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu (agenda point #5).	21	11-14 Sep 2012	Druk nr 606
32.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o uchyleniu dekretu o obszarach szczególnie ważnych dla obrony kraju oraz o zmianie ustawy Kodeks morski (agenda point #6).	21	11-14 Sep 2012	Druk nr 663
33.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o dokumentach paszportowych (agenda point #3).	22	26-28 Sep 2012	Druki nr 637 i 709
34.	Informacja ministra sprawiedliwości na temat podejmowanych przez Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości oraz podmioty mu podległe i nadzorowane działań dotyczących zagwarantowania właściwych procedur postępowania ze zwłokami ofiar katastrofy smoleńskiej na terenie Federacji Rosyjskiej (agenda point #17).	22	26-28 Sep 2012	n/a
35.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 90. rocznicy rozpoczęcia budowy portu morskiego w Gdyni (agenda point #28).	22	26-28 Sep 2012	Druk nr 746

36.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 20. rocznicy nawiązania stosunków dyplomatycznych między Rzeczpospolitą Polską i Republiką Mołdawii (agenda point #29).	22	26-28 Sep 2012	Druk nr 736
37.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o dokumentach paszportowych (agenda point #1).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druki nr 637 i 709
38.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie informacji ministra sprawiedliwości na temat podejmowanych przez Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości oraz podmioty mu podległe i nadzorowane działań dotyczących zagwarantowania właściwych procedur postępowania ze zwłokami ofiar katastrofy smoleńskiej na terenie Federacji Rosyjskiej (agenda point #38).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	n/a
39.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Zofii i Stefana Korbońskich (agenda point #42).	23	10-12 Oct 2012	Druk nr 800
40.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w związku z 70. rocznicą powstania Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych (agenda point #13).	25	7-9 Nov 2012	Druki nr 743 i 820

41.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Zdrowia o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia 18 kwietnia Narodowym Dniem Pacjenta w Śpiączce (agenda point #7).	27	21-23 Nov 2012	Druki nr 326 i 798
42.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2013 Rokiem Pamięci o Powstaniu Styczniowym (agenda point #8).	27	21-23 Nov 2012	Druki nr 593 i 821
43.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy powstania Rady Pomocy Żydom "Żegota" (agenda point #23).	27	21-23 Nov 2012	Druki nr 907 i 912
44.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy wysiedleń z Zamojszczyzny (agenda point #24).	27	21-23 Nov 2012	Druk nr 915
45.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia setnej rocznicy urodzin Jerzego Turowicza (agenda point#16).	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druki nr 824 i 842
46.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o przedstawionym przez Prezydium Sejmu projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2013 Rokiem	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druki nr 869 i 898

	Osób Niepełnosprawnych (agenda point #17).			
47.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2013 Rokiem Jana Czochralskiego (agenda point #18).	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druki nr 865 i 899
48.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2013 Rokiem Witolda Lutosławskiego (agenda point #20).	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druki nr 867 i 901
49.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w związku z 90. rocznicą zamordowania prezydenta Gabriela Narutowicza (agenda point #31).	28	5-7 Dec 2012	Druk nr 956
50.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2013 Rokiem Hipolita Cegielskiego (agenda point #7).	29	10-12 Dec 2012	Druki nr 868 i 902
51.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2013 Rokiem Hipolita Cegielskiego (agenda point #15).	30	12-14 Dec 2012	Druki nr 868 i 902

52.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w 150. rocznicę wybuchu Powstania Styczniowego (agenda point #22).	31	3-4 Jan 2013	Druk nr 1022
53.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia powstania Teatru Polskiego w Warszawie (agenda point #29).	32	23-25 Jan 2013	Druk nr 1055
54.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o przedstawionym przez Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o przebudowie i modernizacji technicznej oraz finansowaniu Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (agenda point #3).	34	19-22 Feb 2013	Druki nr 780 i 1021
55.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o Korpusie Weteranów Walk o Niepodległość Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (agenda point #3).	35	6-8 Mar 2013	Druk nr 1099
56.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o: 1) poselskim projekcie uchwały w związku ze 120. rocznicą powstania Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 2) poselskim projekcie uchwały w 120. rocznicę powstania Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej (agenda point #4).	35	6-8 Mar 2013	Druki nr 994, 995 i 1074

57.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w 70. rocznicę wybuchu Powstania w Getcie Warszawskim (agenda point #1).	38	17-19 Apr 2013	Druk nr 1266
58.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 140. rocznicy urodzin Wojciecha Korfanteo (agenda point #20).	38	17-19 Apr 2013	Druki nr 1227 i 1260
59.	Przedstawione przez Radę Języka Polskiego "Sprawozdanie ze stanu ochrony języka polskiego w latach 2010-2011" wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu (agenda point #27).	39	8-10 May 2013	Druk nr 1083 i 1211
60.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Grzegorza Przemyka - ofiary stanu wojennego w 30. rocznicę Jego śmierci (agenda point #1).	41	22-24 May 2013	druk nr 1372).
61.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia dnia 4 czerwca Dniem Wolności i Praw Obywatelskich (agenda point #15).	41	22-24 May 2013	Druki nr 1281, 1320 i 1320-A

62.	Sprawozdanie ministra spraw wewnętrznych z realizacji w 2012 r. ustawy z dnia 24 marca 1920 r. o nabywaniu nieruchomości przez cudzoziemców wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Spraw Wewnętrznych (agenda point #24).	43	12-14 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1255 i 1314
63.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o urzędzie Ministra Obrony Narodowej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #1).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1236, 1453 i 1453-A
64.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o kombatanach oraz niektórych osobach będących ofiarami represji wojennych i okresu powojennego oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #9).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druk nr 1417
65.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Aleksandra Fredry w 220. rocznicę urodzin (agenda point #13).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1359 i 1399
66.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie sprawozdania ministra spraw wewnętrznych z realizacji w 2012 r. ustawy z dnia 24 marca 1920 r. o nabywaniu nieruchomości przez cudzoziemców (agenda point #19).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druki nr 1255 i 1314

67.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskich projektach uchwał w sprawie: 1) ustanowienia Dnia Pamięci i Męczeństwa Kresowian, 2) ustanowienia 11 lipca Dniem Pamięci Męczeństwa Kresowian, 3) ustanowienia dnia 11 lipca Dniem Pamięci Męczeństwa Kresowian, 4) ludobójstwa dokonanego przez OUN - UPA na ludności polskiej Kresów Wschodnich w latach 1939-1947, 5) uczczenia 70. rocznicy tragedii ludności polskiej na Kresach Wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej (agenda point #7).	45	10-12 Jul 2013	Druki nr 327, 470, 536, 1295, 1333, 1415 i 1415-A
68.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci ofiar mordu profesorów uczelni lwowskich w lipcu 1941 roku (agenda point #9).	45	10-12 Jul 2013	Druki nr 1385, 1479 i 1479-A
69.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Spraw Wewnętrznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o dokumentach paszportowych (agenda point #7).	46	23-26 Jul 2013	Druki nr 1510 i 1560
70.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o cudzoziemcach (agenda point #8).	46	23-26 Jul 2013	Druk nr 1526

71.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w 70 rocznicę buntu więźniów w niemieckim, nazistowskim Obozie Zagłady w Treblince.	46	23-26 Jul 2013	n/a
72.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o służbie wojskowej żołnierzy zawodowych oraz o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #11).	48	11-12 Sep 2013	Druki nr 1278 i 1673
73.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia dnia 20 września Ogólnopolskim Dniem Przedszkolaka (agenda point #1).	49	13 Sep 2013	Druki nr 1663 i 1695
74.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 330 rocznicy Bitwy pod Wiedniem (agenda point #2).	49	13 Sep 2013	Druki nr 1132 i 1697
75.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o służbie wojskowej żołnierzy zawodowych oraz o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #12).	49	13 Sep 2013	Druki nr 1278 i 1673
76.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie	50	25-27 Sep 2013	Druki nr 1446 i 1694

	ustanowienia 17 września Dniem Sybiraka (agenda point #28).			
77.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie wyrażenia solidarności z prześladowanymi wspólnotami chrześcijańskimi w Egipcie i Syrii (agenda point #14).	51	9-11 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1702 i 1776
78.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o służbie wojskowej żołnierzy zawodowych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #19).	51	9-11 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1790 i 1810
79.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 1150. rocznicy misji świętych Cyryla i Metodego wśród Słowian (agenda point #16).	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1447 i 1802
80.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 200 rocznicy śmierci księcia Józefa Poniatowskiego (agenda point #17).	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1768 i 1803
81.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia sierżanta Józefa Franczaka, pseudonim "Lalek",	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1613 i 1809

	ostatniego żołnierza antykomunistycznego podziemia w 50 rocznicę śmierci (agenda point #18).			
82.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o przyznaniu świadczenia pieniężnego i renty inwalidzkiej przysługującym sybirakom - kombatanom przebywającym w latach 1939-1956 na przymusowym zesłaniu lub deportacji w byłym Związku Socjalistycznych Republik Radzieckich (agenda point #20).	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druk nr 1657
83.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w 65. rocznicę śmierci Kardynała Augusta Hlonda (agenda point #28).	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1830 i 1851
84.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy bitwy pod Lenino (agenda point #29).	52	22-24 Oct 2013	Druki nr 1839 i 1852
85.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Tadeusza Mazowieckiego (agenda point #1).	53	6-8 Nov 2013	Druk nr 1879
86.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Spraw Wewnętrznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o cudzoziemcach (agenda point #6).	53	6-8 Nov 2013	Druki nr 1526, 1853 i 1853-A

87.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w 65. rocznicę śmierci Kardynała Augusta Hlonda (agenda point #26).	53	6-8 Nov 2013	Druki nr 1830 i 1851
88.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy bitwy pod Lenino (agenda point #27).	53	6-8 Nov 2013	Druki nr 1839 i 1852
89.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie 95. rocznicy powstania rządu Ignacego Daszyńskiego (agenda point #35).	53	6-8 Nov 2013	Druki nr 1880 i 1891
90.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w sprawie sytuacji na Ukrainie (agenda point #1).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	Druk nr 1954
91.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2014 Rokiem Oskara Kolberga (agenda point #3).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	Druki nr 1784 i 1922
92.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2014 Rokiem Jana Karskiego (agenda point #4).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	Druki nr 1872 i 1924

93.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2014 Rokiem św. Jana z Dukli (agenda point #5).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	Druki nr 1873, 1923 i 1923-A
94.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 95. rocznicy przyznania Polkom praw wyborczych (agenda point #30).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	Druk nr 1969
95.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Włodzimierza Przerwy-Tetmajera w 90. rocznicę Jego śmierci (agenda point #5).	56	11-13 Dec 2013	Druki nr 1947 i 1971
96.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Spraw Wewnętrznych o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o cudzoziemcach (agenda point #9).	56	11-13 Dec 2013	Druki 1982 i 1995
97.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 32. rocznicy wprowadzenia stanu wojennego (agenda point #1).	57	13 Dec 2013	Druk nr 2008
98.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w 95. rocznicę wybuchu Powstania Wielkopolskiego (agenda point #2).	57	13 Dec 2013	Druk nr 2011
99.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o:	58	8-10 Jan 2014	Druki nr 677, 1099, 1417 i 1997

	<p>1) senackim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o kombatantach oraz niektórych osobach będących ofiarami represji wojennych i okresu powojennego,</p> <p>2) poselskim projekcie ustawy o Korpusie Weteranów Walk o Niepodległość Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej,</p> <p>3) rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o kombatantach oraz niektórych osobach będących ofiarami represji wojennych i okresu powojennego oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #2).</p>			
100.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o powszechnym obowiązku obrony Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz zmianie ustawy o uposażeniu żołnierzy niezawodowych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #11).	58	8-10 Jan 2014	Druk nr 1992
101.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o Instytucie Pamięci Narodowej - Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu oraz ustawy Kodeks karny (aga point #14).	58	8-10 Jan 2014	Druk nr 1958

102.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Wincentego Witosa w 140. rocznicę jego urodzin (agenda point #1).	59	22-24 Jan 2014	Druk nr 2062
103.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o: 1) senackim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o kombatanach oraz niektórych osobach będących ofiarami represji wojennych i okresu powojennego, 2) poselskim projekcie ustawy o Korpusie Weteranów Walk o Niepodległość Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 3) rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o kombatanach oraz niektórych osobach będących ofiarami represji wojennych i okresu powojennego oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #22).	59	22-24 Jan 2014	Druki nr 677, 1099, 1417, 1997 i 1997-A
104.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie wydarzeń na Ukrainie (agenda point #27).	59	22-24 Jan 2014	Druk nr 2083
105.	Informacja prezesa Rady Ministrów w sprawie sytuacji na Ukrainie (agenda point #1).	61	19-21 Feb 2014	n/a

106.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia pułkownika Ryszarda Kuklińskiego (agenda point #15).	61	19-21 Feb 2014	Druki nr 2066 i 2099
107.	Pierwsze czytanie senackiego projektu ustawy o działaczach opozycji antykomunistycznej oraz osobach represjonowanych z powodów politycznych (agenda point #21).	61	19-21 Feb 2014	Druk nr 2137
108.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Macieja Rataja w 130. rocznicę urodzin (agenda point #26).	61	19-21 Feb 2014	Druk nr 2166
109.	Informacja prezesa Rady Ministrów w sprawie aktualnej sytuacji na Ukrainie (agenda point #1).	62	5 Mar 2014	n/a
110.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie solidarności z Ukrainą (agenda point #2).	62	5 Mar 2014	Druk nr 2187
111.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie 15. rocznicy członkostwa Polski w NATO (agenda point #1).	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druk nr 2204
112.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druki nr 2126 i 2160

	uczczenia 25. rocznicy obrad Okrągłego Stołu (agenda point #9).			
113.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o powszechnym obowiązku obrony Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz zmianie ustawy o uposażeniu żołnierzy niezawodowych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #17).	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druki nr 1992 i 2158
114.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o kombatanach oraz niektórych osobach będących ofiarami represji wojennych i okresu powojennego oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #22).	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druki nr 2173 i 2212
115.	Pierwsze czytanie senackiego projektu ustawy o działaczach opozycji antykomunistycznej oraz osobach represjonowanych z powodów politycznych (agenda point #27).	63	12-14 Mar 2014	Druk nr 2137
116.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Jacka Kuronia (agenda point #28).	64	19-21 Mar 2014	Druk nr 2225
117.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druk nr 2260

	sześćsetlecie nawiązania polsko-tureckich stosunków dyplomatycznych (agenda point #1).			
118.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o zaopatrzeniu emerytalnym żołnierzy zawodowych oraz ich rodzin oraz ustawy o zaopatrzeniu emerytalnym funkcjonariuszy Policji, Agencji Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego, Agencji Wywiadu, Służby Kontrwywiadu Wojskowego, Służby Wywiadu Wojskowego, Centralnego Biura Antykorupcyjnego, Straży Granicznej, Biura Ochrony Rządu, Państwowej Straży Pożarnej i Służby Więziennej oraz ich rodzin (agenda point #6).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2049 i 2237
119.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia setnej rocznicy śmierci Józefa Chełmońskiego (agenda point #13).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2108 i 2222
120.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Mniejszości Narodowych i Etnicznych o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku regionalnym oraz ustawy o	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2223 i 2291

	działach administracji rządowej (agenda point #5).			
121.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 10. rocznicy śmierci Jacka Kaczmarskiego (agenda point #6).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2253 i 2279
122.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o powszechnym obowiązku obrony Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #14).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2308 i 2332
123.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży oraz Komisji Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o systemie oświaty oraz ustawy o cudzoziemcach (agenda point #15).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2309 i 2312
124.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia papieża bł. Jana Pawła II w dniu Jego kanonizacji (agenda point #23).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druki nr 2321 i 2329
125.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 650-lecia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego (agenda point #26).	67	7-9 May 2014	Druk nr 2373

126.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o zasadach użycia lub pobytu Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej poza granicami państwa (agenda point #6).	68	28-30 May 2014	Druki nr 2170 i 2358
127.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Mniejszości Narodowych i Etnicznych o uchwale Senatu w sprawie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku regionalnym oraz ustawy o działach administracji rządowej (agenda point #27).	68	28-30 May 2014	Druki nr 2402 i 2437
128.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 70. rocznicy zwycięskiej bitwy o Monte Cassino (agenda point #1).	69	5-6, 10 Jun 2014	Druki nr 2376 i 2408
129.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o Radzie Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa (agenda point #9).	69	5-6, 10 Jun 2014	Druki nr 1492, 1517 i 1517-A
130.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o statusie Weterana Opozycji Antykomunistycznej i Korpusie Weterana Opozycji	69	5-6, 10 Jun 2014	Druk nr 2342

	Antykomunistycznej wobec dyktatury komunistycznej PRL w latach 1956-1989 oraz o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #20).			
131.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o zasadach użycia lub pobytu Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej poza granicami państwa (agenda point #29).	69	5-6, 10 Jun 2014	Druki nr 2170 i 2358
132.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 150. rocznicy urodzin oraz 75. rocznicy śmierci Romana Dmowskiego (agenda point #8).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2084 i 2582
133.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 150. rocznicy śmierci Romualda Traugutta (agenda point #45).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2547 i 2628
134.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci ofiar Obławy Augustowskiej z lipca 1945 roku (agenda point #47).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2513 i 2626

135.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie oddania hołdu bohaterom polskiej drogi do niepodległości (agenda point #48).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2546 i 2627
136.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy Powstania Wileńskiego - operacji "Ostra Brama" (agenda point #49).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2548 i 2629
137.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w 70. rocznicę wybuchu Powstania Warszawskiego (agenda point #50).	72	22-25 Jul 2014	Druki nr 2623 i 2635
138.	Pierwsze czytanie przedstawionego przez Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o powszechnym obowiązku obrony Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #14).	73	27-29 Aug 2014	Druk nr 2609
139.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Augusta Cieszkowskiego w 200. rocznicę Jego urodzin (agenda point #17).	74	10-12 Sep 2014	Druki nr 2712 i 2717

140.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w 25. rocznicę powołania Rządu premiera Tadeusza Mazowieckiego (agenda point #23).	74	10-12 Sep 2014	Druk nr 2733
141.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ludobójstwa dokonywanego na chrześcijanach, jazydach, Kurdach oraz innych mniejszościach religijnych i etnicznych przez organizację terrorystyczną tzw. Islamskie Państwo (ISIS) na obszarze północnego Iraku i Syrii (agenda point #11).	75	24-26 Sep 2014	Druki nr 2696 i 2721
142.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Ustawodawczej o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zniesieniu 9 maja jako Narodowego Święta Zwycięstwa i Wolności (agenda point #14).	75	24-26 Sep 2014	Druki nr 2533 i 2704
143.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci ofiar masowej zbrodni dokonanej na Pomorzu Gdańskim w latach 1939-1940 (agenda point #25).	75	24-26 Sep 2014	Druk nr 2762
144.	Pierwsze czytanie obywatelskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku	77	8-10 Oct 2014	Druk nr 2699

	regionalnym, a także niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #12).			
145.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Cyfryzacji o senackim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o orderach i odznaczeniach (agenda point #21).	77	8-10 Oct 2014	Druki nr 2543, 2727 i 2727-A
146.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie 30. rocznicy śmierci ks. Jerzego Popiełuszki (agenda point #26).	77	8-10 Oct 2014	Druki nr 2788 i 2789
147.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia 70. rocznicy przybycia do Nowej Zelandii polskich dzieci i ich opiekunów (agenda point #28).	77	8-10 Oct 2014	Druk nr 2806
148.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie 30. rocznicy śmierci błogosławionego księdza Jerzego Popiełuszki (agenda point #29).	77	8-10 Oct 2014	Druk nr 2810
149.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny oraz Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia dnia 20 listopada Ogólnopolskim Dniem Praw Dziecka (agenda point #10).	79	5-7 Nov 2014	Druki nr 2813 i 2871
150.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie	80	26-28 Nov 2014	Druki nr 2862 i 2912

	uczczenia 75. rocznicy wysiedleń ludności cywilnej z Gdyni przez okupanta niemieckiego i oddania hołdu ich ofiarom (agenda point #28).			
151.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2015 Rokiem Jana Pawła II (agenda point #14).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 1861 i 2931
152.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskich projektach uchwał w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2015 Rokiem Jana Długosza (agenda point #15).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2747, 2817 i 2932
153.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2015 Rokiem Polskiego Teatru Publicznego (agenda point #16).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2897 i 2933
154.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie uczczenia pamięci Stanisława Dygata w związku z 100. rocznicą Jego urodzin (agenda point #30).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2950 i 2956
155.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Ustawodawczej o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zniesieniu 9 maja jako Narodowego Święta	83	17-19 Dec 2014	Druki nr 2533, 2704 i 2704-A

	Zwycięstwa i Wolności (agenda point #15).			
156.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Polityki Senioralnej o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia profesor Haliny Szwarc w związku z 40. rocznicą powstania pierwszego w Polsce Uniwersytetu Trzeciego Wieku (agenda point #11).	86	4-6 Feb 2015	Druki nr 3050 i 3082
157.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o komisyjnym projekcie uchwały w 70. rocznicę Tragedii Górnośląskiej 1945 roku (agenda point #26).	92	13-15 May 2015	druki nr 3327 i 3372
158.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego w 80. rocznicę śmierci (agenda point #27).	92	13-15 May 2015	Druki nr 3364 i 3373
159.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o udzielaniu cudzoziemcom ochrony na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #25).	94	10-12 Jun 2015	Druk nr 3433
160.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskich projektach uchwał w sprawie: - uczczenia ofiar przewrotu majowego 1926 roku,	94	10-12 Jun 2015	Druki nr 3379, 3414 i 3416

	- uczczenia pamięci ofiar zamachu majowego 1926 r. (agenda point #36).			
161.	Poselski projekt uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia dnia 14 czerwca Narodowym Dniem Pamięci Ofiar Niemieckich Nazistowskich Obozów Koncentracyjnych i Obozów Zagłady (agenda point #39).	94	10-12 Jun 2015	Druk nr 3498
162.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Spraw Wewnętrznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o udzielaniu cudzoziemcom ochrony na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #20).	96	7-10 Jul 2015	druki nr 3433, 3607 i 3607-A).
163.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie ustawy o ustanowieniu Dnia Pamięci Ofiar Obławy Augustowskiej z lipca 1945 roku (agenda point #21).	96	7-10 Jul 2015	Druki nr 3294 i 3531
164.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Obrony Narodowej o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie upamiętnienia lotników polskich walczących w czasie II wojny światowej (agenda point #34).	97	21-24 Jul 2015	Druki nr 3480 i 3617
165.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w 155. rocznicę urodzin Ignacego Jana Paderewskiego (agenda point #57).	99	9-11 Sep 2015	Druk nr 3895

166.	Informacja prezesa Rady Ministrów na temat kryzysu migracyjnego w Europie i jego reperkusji dla Polski (agenda point #1).	100	16 Sep 2015	n/a
167.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Administracji i Cyfryzacji oraz Komisji Mniejszości Narodowych i Etnicznych o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku regionalnym oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #27).	101	23-25 Sep 2015	Druki nr 3545, 3767 i 3767-A
168.	Przedstawiony przez Prezydium Sejmu projekt uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia dnia 2 października Dniem Pamięci o Cywilnej Ludności Powstańczej Warszawy (agenda point #32).	101	23-25 Sep 2015	Druk nr 3938

List of plenary debates on the ‘war on gender’ analysed in chapter 7:

	Agenda point and legislative proposal title	Plenary session number	Date	Parliamentary (legislative) reference number
1.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o wdrożeniu niektórych przepisów Unii Europejskiej w zakresie równego traktowania oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #18).	44	19-21 Jun 2013	Druk nr 1051
2.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Zdrowia o poselskim projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o zawodach pielęgniarki i położnej (agenda point #5).	46	23-26 Jul 2013	druki nr 1354 i 1544).
3.	Głosowanie nad wnioskiem o odrzucenie informacji minister edukacji narodowej na temat skutków wynikających ze zmiany ustawy z dnia 7 września 1991 r. o systemie oświaty, dokonanej ustawą z dnia 13 czerwca 2013 r., w zakresie przeprowadzania zajęć dodatkowych na terenie przedszkoli, niejednoznaczności rozstrzygnięć legislacyjnych powodujących niepokój i protesty rodziców dzieci uczęszczających do publicznych przedszkoli (agenda point #26).	55	3-6 Dec 2013	n/a

4.	Pierwsze czytanie rządowego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy Kodeks karny oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #2).	59	22-24 Jan 2014	druk nr 2016).
5.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży o pilnym rządowym projekcie ustawy o zmianie ustawy o systemie oświaty (agenda point #5).	61	19-21 Feb 2014	Druki nr 2075, 2141 i 2141-A
6.	Przedstawione przez Radę Ministrów sprawozdanie z realizacji "Krajowego programu przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie" za okres od 1 stycznia 2012 r. do 31 grudnia 2012 r. (druk nr 1950) wraz ze stanowiskiem Komisji Polityki Społecznej i Rodziny (agenda point #25).	65	2-4 Apr 2014	Druk nr 2148
7.	Pierwsze czytanie pilnego rządowego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy o systemie oświaty oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #18).	66	23-24 Apr 2014	Druk nr 2315
8.	Pierwsze czytanie poselskiego projektu ustawy o zmianie ustawy Kodeks pracy oraz niektórych innych ustaw (agenda point #16).	74	10-12 Sep 2014	Druk nr 1948
9.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o	75	24-26 Sep 2014	Druki nr 2515 i 2701

	ratyfikacji Konwencji Rady Europy o zapobieganiu i zwalczaniu przemocy wobec kobiet i przemocy domowej, sporządzonej w Stambule dnia 11 maja 2011 r. (agenda point #13).			
10.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Kultury i Środków Przekazu o poselskim projekcie uchwały w sprawie ustanowienia roku 2015 Rokiem Jana Pawła II (agenda point #14).	81	3-5 Dec 2014	Druki nr 1861 i 2931
11.	Sprawozdanie Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka oraz Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych o rządowym projekcie ustawy o ratyfikacji Konwencji Rady Europy o zapobieganiu i zwalczaniu przemocy wobec kobiet i przemocy domowej, sporządzonej w Stambule dnia 11 maja 2011 r. (agenda point #27).	86	4-6 Feb 2015	Druki nr 2515, 2701 i 2701-A

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